





HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL
ADDRESSES

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1883-1897

BY

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Dublin

SEALY, BRYERS AND WALKER

MIDDLE ABBEY STREET

London

SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, HAMILTON, KENT & CO.

LIMITED

STATIONERS' HALL COURT, E.C.

1898

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PRINTED BY
SEALY, BRYERS AND WALKER,
ABBAY STREET, DUBLIN.

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PREFACE.

THE Addresses contained in the following pages range over a period of fifteen years, but they are not given in any special order. They are printed as they were delivered, and where they are taken from newspapers, the only alterations made are merely literal or verbal corrections. The subjects dealt with being, nearly all of them, of permanent interest for Irishmen, it is hoped that the volume may be found useful by students of Irish History, as well as by those engaged in current politics.

J. E. R.

7 BELVIDERE PLACE,
DUBLIN, 1st Jan., 1898.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
I. FIFTEEN YEARS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS	1
II. HUGH O'NEILL 	31
III. WAS THE LATE LAND LEAGUE RESPONSIBLE FOR CRIME ? 	60
IV. THE AIMS AND OBJECTS OF THE IRISH NATIONAL LEAGUE (1883) 	89
V. IRISH PROTESTANTS AND HOME RULE ...	116
VI. THOMAS DRUMMOND 	135
VII. WEXFORD IN '98 	153
VIII. HOME RULE—ITS REAL MEANING ...	179
IX. THE HOME RULE BILL, 1886 	202
X. THE HOME RULE BILL, 1893 	220
XI. IRISH NATIONAL CONVENTION IN CHICAGO	242
XII. THE COERCION ACT (Defence of Self at Ferns) 	253

	PAGE
XIII. THE COERCION ACT (Defence of Dillon, O'Brien and Others at Tipperary) ...	260
XIV. THE PARNELL CRISIS (First Speech in Committee Room 15) ...	290
XV. THE PARNELL CRISIS (Second Speech in Committee Room 15) ...	301
XVI. THE NATIONAL DEMAND ...	311
XVII. SPEECH IN THE ACADEMY OF MUSIC, NEW YORK ...	331
XVIII. AMNESTY ...	355
XIX. THE FINANCIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND ...	375

HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL ADDRESSES.

FIFTEEN YEARS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

LECTURE DELIVERED IN THE BROADWAY THEATRE,
NEW YORK, ON 29TH NOVEMBER, 1896.

C. H. DANA IN THE CHAIR.

I.

I CANNOT but feel that there must seem something almost presumptuous in my coming before an American audience to tell them anything about the English Parliament. America is so enlightened, so intellectually keen about everything which is going on throughout the world—the American Press casts so piercing a search-light around the globe, that the average American probably knows as much of our institutions and life in Europe as we do ourselves. Your newspapers spread before you every morning a record of the world's doings—even its most hidden things—the secrets of Cabinets, the private treaty of kings, the schemes of armies, the inner personal history of political manœuvres, to say nothing of the comedies and tragedies of society.

In coming to speak to you therefore on the subject which has been suggested for my lecture to-night, I am oppressed by a double sense of difficulty and doubt. First, I feel that

I shall find it hard to tell you anything about the British Parliament which you have not already been told in a more interesting way by those Argus-eyed correspondents whom your great newspapers keep in London to describe our doings; and on the other hand I am oppressed by the consciousness that—strange as the confession may appear from a politician—this is a form of public speaking to which I am quite unaccustomed.

I could advocate without too much hesitation the cause for which I have done my best to fight during the past fifteen years in the House of Commons; that is to say, I could readily strike a blow in the fight—that comes naturally to a fighter—but to describe the scenes and incidents and personalities of the fight is another matter. However, I suppose my justification is, after all, that I *have* been in the fight, taking part in it and can say of it "*pars exigua fui*;" and perhaps the point of view of a man so situated towards the events he speaks of is not without an interest of its own.

Cardinal Newman in one of his essays says the Houses of Parliament are a sort of "University of Politics."

"A member of the Legislature," he says, "if tolerably observant, begins to see things with new eyes even though his views undergo no change. He learns a vast deal in public speeches and private conversations which is never put in print. The bearing of measures and events, the action of parties and the character of friends and enemies are brought out to the man who is in the midst of them with a distinctness which the most diligent perusal of the newspapers will fail to impart to them."

Looking at it in this way it is possible that what I have to say may not prove superfluous or unwelcome to you. On my side I will enjoy as a pleasant interlude this rare opportunity of standing aside from the dust and heat of the strife and contemplating it as a spectator.

The House of Commons throughout its long and chequered history has most of the time been a true reflex of the mind of the British nation, and its attitude at different periods towards men and towards events has generally been the attitude which the nation at large has eventually assumed. During my short time I have seen it change again and again in its way of regarding and feeling towards certain men and certain events, and I have seen the British nation invariably follow or at least keep time with its varying phases.

I propose to-night, with your permission, to tell you something of my experiences of some of the great and remarkable Englishmen with whom it has been my lot to be in political relations during the past fifteen years. I shall have something to say of Gladstone and Disraeli, of Bright, of Churchill, and others, but in the first place it will be necessary for me to explain briefly to you the extraordinary political situation which existed in the House of Commons when I first entered its walls, and to draw a picture for you, as briefly as may be, of perhaps the most remarkable figure which ever appeared in that assembly—I mean Charles Stewart Parnell.

When I entered Parliament, fifteen years ago, the British public was in the very midst of one of the most desperate of the Irish crises. An Irish leader had arisen who had taken a new way of obtaining redress for Ireland. Mr. Parnell found that the British Parliament insisted upon turning a deaf ear to Ireland's claim for justice. He resolved to adopt the simple yet masterly device of preventing Parliament doing any work at all until it consented to listen. In this policy he was successful. He was the first man who, as Wendel Philips afterwards said of him in Boston, made John Bull listen to the voice of Ireland.

The task he had undertaken was a desperate one—and at first all the odds were against him. He was in a small minority in his own Party. Isaac Butt, the Leader of the Irish Party, a great orator and constitutional lawyer, commanded the allegiance of four-fifths of the Home Rule Members and had denounced the new policy as mischievous and insane. Parnell himself was young, inexperienced, not gifted with an Irish fluency of speech, but, on the contrary, weighted with a halting delivery almost painful to listen to. All the men of brilliant Parliamentary talent amongst the Irish Members were against him. On his side were only a handful of young untried and inexperienced Members. More than all perhaps, he had the unwritten laws and traditions of the House of Commons to combat. On the other hand, however, he had to sustain him the sympathy of the masses of the Irish people, and he speedily found within the four corners of the rules and orders of the House ample room to obstruct public business and to paralyse the legislative machine. With consummate skill, he and Mr. Biggar fastened upon those questions in particular which were likely to command a certain amount of sympathy from the more extreme Radicals. They fought the Prisons' Bill in the interest of a more humane treatment of prisoners, and especially in order to obtain a distinction between the treatment of political offenders and ordinary criminals. They fought the Factories' Bill in the interest of the workmen and workwomen. They raised the question of flogging soldiers in the British Army, and eventually succeeded in securing its abolition. They resisted the South African policy of absorbing the Transvaal, and all these questions they attracted a certain amount of sympathy and support from English Radicals. But their efforts did not end there. They interfered systematically

in every single detail of Parliamentary business. Nothing was too large or too small a question for discussion. Night after night they talked by the hour upon every subject that arose, until the astonished Legislature suddenly woke up to the fact that by the action of this handful of young Irishmen the entire legislative machine has been brought to a stand-still. Then there burst over the heads of Mr. Parnell and his friend a perfect storm of abuse, hatred, and passion. Their rising to address the House was invariably the signal for an outburst of howls of execration, and Mr. Parnell in particular often stood for half an hour at a time before he could utter a word. But he proved himself perfectly insensible to such methods. He cared neither for the praise nor the abuse of this British Parliament. His object was to injure it so long as it refused to listen to the just claims of his country. If the House groaned, he smiled and paused until the groans were over. If the House was turbulent, he remained calm. He spoke always reasonably, always at great length. By degrees he came to be feared almost as much as hated. Again and again he and Mr. Biggar were expelled from the House. The next day they invariably returned and calmly resumed their tactics. On one famous occasion Mr. Biggar spoke for four hours. At first, Members indulged in the usual interruptions, and seeing that Mr. Biggar rather welcomed them as affording him a pleasant rest, they adopted another plan to discourage him and left the House in a body, some half-dozen only of their number remaining. Looking in an hour later, they found him still on his legs reading long extracts from Blue Books to empty benches. An hour later he was still talking. After three hours the Speaker attempted to cut him short. There is a rule of the House that every Member must make himself audible to

the chair, and Mr. Biggar's voice had grown weak and husky. "The Hon. Member is not making himself audible to the chair," said Mr. Speaker Brand. "That is because I am too far away from you, sir," said Mr. Biggar, who immediately gathered together his books and papers, and picking up his glass of water walked solemnly up the floor of the House and took up a position within a yard of the chair. "As you have not heard me, Mr. Speaker," said he, "perhaps I had better begin all over again."

Parliament thus lay absolutely at the mercy of this new policy, and Liberals and Tories alike threw all considerations of Party aside, and devoted themselves to the task of devising some new rules to rescue the House of Commons from destruction.

All this was witnessed with beating hearts by the people of Ireland. Hope in Parliamentary action revived, and day by day Mr. Parnell's power grew. Mr. Butt had died. His successor, Mr. Shaw, was politically a cipher, and the General Election of 1880 saw Mr. Parnell safely installed as Leader of the Irish Nationalist Party, and his policy enthusiastically adopted by the people. While these events had been occurring in Parliament the Land League movement had sprung into life in Ireland, and almost the first work which the new House of Commons, under Gladstone, was asked to undertake was the passage of a Coercion Act suspending the Constitution and abolishing Trial by Jury. All England was ablaze with excitement. Mr. Parnell and his Party were engaged in a life and death struggle in the House of Commons to prevent the passage of the measure. It was at this moment that I was first elected to Parliament.

At the moment when the Sheriff declared me duly elected, the House of Commons had already been sitting

continuously for some twenty-four hours. The brunt of the fight against the Coercion Bill was being borne by some dozen of Mr. Parnell's most active supporters, and they were looking anxiously for my election to send them a recruit. I received a wire urging me not to lose an hour in crossing to Westminster. I started at once, and travelled all night to London. On my way I received another wire saying the House was still sitting. I reached London about seven o'clock on a dark and cold winter's morning. I drove straight from the station to the House of Commons, and it was thus travel-stained and weary that I first presented myself as a Member of the British Parliament. The House was still sitting—it had been sitting without a break for over forty hours. I shall never forget the appearance the Chamber presented. The floor was littered with paper. A few dishevelled and weary Irishmen on one side of the House, about a hundred infuriated Englishmen upon the other; some of them still in evening dress, and wearing what once were the white shirts of the night before last. Mr. Parnell was upon his legs, with pale cheeks and drawn face, his hands clenched behind his back facing without flinching a continuous roar of interruption. It was now about eight o'clock. Half of Mr. Parnell's followers were out of the Chamber snatching a few moments' sleep in chairs in the library or smokeroom. Those who remained had each a specified period of time allotted to him to speak, and they were wearily waiting their turn. As they caught sight of me standing at the bar of the House they sent up a cheer of welcome. I was unable to come to their aid, however, as under the Rules of the House I could not take my seat until the commencement of a new sitting. My very presence, however, brought a sense of encouragement and approaching relief

to them, and I stood there at the bar with my rough travelling coat still upon me, gazing alternately with indignation and admiration at the amazing scene being enacted before me. Here then was the great Parliament of England. Of intelligent debate there was none. It was one unbroken scene of turbulence and disorder. The few Irishmen remained quiet, too amused, perhaps, or too much exhausted to retaliate. It was the Englishmen—the members of the first assembly of gentlemen in Europe as they love to style it—who howled and roared and almost foamed at the mouth with rage, at the calm and pale-faced young man, who stood patiently facing them and endeavouring from time to time to make himself heard. The galleries were filled with strangers every whit as excited as the Members, and even the ladies' gallery contained its dozen or so of eager spectators. No one knew what was going to happen. There was no power under the Rules of the House to stop the debate, it had resolved itself into a question of physical endurance, and it seemed as if the Irishmen, battling for the liberties of their country were capable of resisting until the impotence of the House of Commons had covered it with the contempt and ridicule of Europe.

At last the end came suddenly and unexpectedly. At eight o'clock, Mr. Speaker Brand, from a sense of duty, as he said, and acting on his own responsibility, and in defiance of the Rules of the House, ordered the debate to end.

The correspondent of a great English newspaper thus described the scene:—

“ Amid breathless silence the Speaker began to read from a paper which trembled like an aspen leaf in his hand. For all his grave and stately quietude the Speaker is a nervous man, and always brings to

the performance of his duty a disturbing consciousness of its momentous character. The task he was now engaged on was enough to shake the nerves of a stronger man. Never since Cromwell entered the House, at the head of his men-at-arms, had regular Parliamentary procedure been subject to this swift and arbitrary cutting off by the mandate of a single man. But the Speaker got through his task with dignity, being strengthened by the burst of enthusiastic cheers which greeted him."

The Irish Members endeavoured to protest by speech against this proceeding, and failing in the attempt, they rose in their seats and left the Chamber in a body shouting, "Privilege," a cry not heard in that place since Charles I. attempted to invade the liberty of Parliament. So ended the first battle over this Coercion Bill, the net result being that England found, in order to suspend the Constitution in Ireland, she was obliged to destroy the most cherished tradition and most precious possession of her Parliament—the freedom of speech of its members.

The following day my membership of the House of Commons actually commenced, and I had an experience, I believe, absolutely unique in Parliamentary history. I took my oath and seat, made my maiden speech, and was suspended and expelled from the House, for the rest of the sitting all in the same evening. It was none of my choosing, however, I had this distinction thrust upon me. It occurred in this way. The excitement of the previous day had been intensified by the news of the arrest of Mr. Davitt in Ireland. Mr. Dillon had endeavoured to extract some explanation from the Government, and had been named and suspended, and then Mr. Parnell, on the Prime Minister rising to speak, moved "That Mr. Gladstone be not heard." What then occurred was thus described by an English journalist at the time:—

"The Speaker ruled that Mr. Gladstone was in possession of the

House, whereupon Mr. Parnell, rising amid cheers from the Irish Members, moved that Mr. Gladstone be not heard. The Speaker again calling on Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Parnell shouted out: 'I insist upon my motion being put.' The Speaker having warned Mr. Parnell that his conduct was wilfully obstructive, again called on Mr. Gladstone who had not proceeded beyond his first sentence when Mr. Parnell, rising again excitedly, insisted upon his right to be heard. 'I name Mr. Parnell as disregarding the authority of the Chair,' said the Speaker, and Mr. Gladstone moved his suspension. The House was cleared for a division in the usual manner, but the Irish Members remained seated. Mr. R. Power, the whip, walking round and round as a shepherd's dog guards a flock of sheep. Mr. Sullivan shouted out: 'We contest the legality of the proceeding,' and the Speaker, after the division, reported the matter to the House."

For this refusal to vote thirty-seven Irish members were suspended, myself among the number. Having been suspended, we each in turn refused to leave the Chamber, and addressing the Speaker protested against the entire proceeding, and intimated that unless superior force was employed we should resist. That was my maiden speech. Superior force in the shape of the Sergeant-at-Arms and his merry men was applied, and eventually each one of us was escorted under arrest from our seats. In this way my Parliamentary career opened with the unique experience of taking my seat, making my maiden speech, and being expelled by force from the Chamber on the same evening.

During the fifteen years which have passed away since then I have been thrown into political contact with some great and many remarkable Englishmen, Disraeli, Gladstone, Bright, Chamberlain, Churchill, Harcourt and Balfour. I have seen the triumph of their genius, the development of their character, the powerful spell they have thrown over the House of Commons and the people of Great Britain, but I can with perfect truth assert that

not one of them presented so strange, so fascinating, so commanding a personality as Charles Stewart Parnell. This testimony as coming from a political disciple and a personal friend may perhaps be regarded by some of you as biassed, but the view of Parnell which I wish to place before you is not that of his friends who knew him and loved him well, but rather that which is accepted to-day universally by the English people who at one time hated him, who at another time respected and honored him, and who at all times feared him. Writing of him after his death a well-known English writer said (and I quote these Englishmen lest it should be thought that my pictures are exaggerated):—

“In years to come the name of Charles Stewart Parnell will be familiar in school books, and his tall figure and pale face will stand out distinct in the portrait gallery of statesmen of the Victorian age. Parnell was not interesting in the same sense as Disraeli was and Gladstone is, but there was about him that fascination which pertains to strong characters whom the public feel they do not thoroughly understand. Disraeli at one epoch of his career was known as the mystery man of politics. That was in his case a mocking phrase used in a sense that implied full insight into the strings and motives of his double shuffling. With Parnell it was different. About him there brooded a real air of mystery that in a subtle way added to his power.”

The truth is, the English never understood Parnell. They never could fathom his aims and his policies. Though a man of strong passion, his outward demeanour was invariably cold and impassive. He seldom spoke once he had risen to a commanding position in Parliament. When he did speak the silence which crept over the House was absolutely painful in its intensity. He had something of that quality which Coleridge attributed to the Ancient Mariner. “He held them with his glittering eye, they

could not choose but hear." He was no orator in the ordinary acceptation of the phrase. Indeed he commenced his Parliamentary career as a halting speaker, with almost an impediment in his speech. As time went on it is true he spoke with ease and fluency, but the great quality of his oratory was its clearness, directness, and terseness. "No man," said Mr. Gladstone of him, "is more successful in doing that which it is commonly supposed all speakers do, but which in my opinion few really do—namely, in saying what he means."

At one time Parnell was the most hated man in the House of Commons. At another he was probably the most powerful and respected. Let me shortly sketch for you one or two pictures which will show you Parnell in both characters. You have already seen him as an obstructionist, detested, absolutely loathed, by Englishmen, fighting almost single-handed against all parties in the House of Commons, certainly the most unpopular man in Britain.

A few years later his position had somewhat changed. He was now more feared than hated, and when in the spring of 1882 he was released from prison, and the policy of Coercion was abandoned by Mr. Gladstone, it seemed as if a reaction was about to set in in England with regard to Ireland, and to Mr. Parnell personally. Suddenly the Phoenix Park murder took place, and the fury and hatred of England burst out afresh with a hundred-fold greater intensity than before. A blind unreasoning fury took possession of the public, and there was but one thought in every English mind, Parnell was the man responsible. Parnell was the man who ought to suffer. Imagine yourselves in the House of Commons at its first meeting forty-eight hours after the murder. All London surged down

towards Westminster. The police with difficulty cleared a passage for Members to enter the building through the crowds in the street outside. Such one or two of the Irish Members as were recognised were greeted with howls of execration. Inside the House there was the stillness of the tomb. By a strange and mysterious instinct every Member had come down dressed in black as to a funeral. Every available inch of room on the floor, and in the galleries was occupied, and when Mr. Gladstone, looking strangely old and haggard, rose to move the adjournment of the House in consequence of the crime, a sort of shiver seemed to run through the entire assembly. Mr. Gladstone himself broke down. He had loved Lord Frederick Cavendish, and he could barely articulate his words in expressing his horror at the deed. When he resumed his seat Mr. Parnell rose, pale and worn after his six months' imprisonment, but calm, erect, and defiant. A strange, fierce murmur ran round the House, the like of which I had never heard. It could not be described as a growl, though it had in it a note of savage hatred. We looked up startled, and knew not what was about to happen, but it suddenly died away into a silence so intense we could almost feel it. What had this man to say? This man, the indirect if not the actual cause of the murder? What right had he to speak—What right had he to be here at all? His very presence was an outrage! Never, as long as I live, shall I forget the looks of fierce detestation turned upon Mr. Parnell at that moment. We, his friends, tried to counteract all this by a cheer, but so chilled were we by the scene that it died away unuttered on our lips. Mr. Parnell, however, did not falter. In a few simple words, expressed without any outward sign of the influence of the scene upon him, he expressed his horror at the crime

and sat down the most hated, distrusted, and feared man in England.

Let me sketch for you another scene in the same place four years later. Once more the House is crowded. Once more all London has flocked to Westminster. Once more an eager crowd of thousands of people wait patiently in the street to see the Members arrive. Their demeanour now is strangely different from what it was on that dreadful day four years before, and as Mr. Parnell quietly makes his way towards the entrance he is recognised and greeted with a cheer. What is the meaning of it all? The answer is simple. To-day Mr. Gladstone is to introduce his first Home Rule Bill, and, next to the aged Premier himself, the Irish Leader holds the largest place at this moment in the public mind of England. When Mr. Parnell rose to address the House of Commons that evening, few could believe that he was the same man, and that the same assembly of the scene after the Phoenix Park tragedy. Mr. Gladstone's oration had been the most powerful heard by that generation of Members, and the echoes of its eloquence would for ever ring in their ears; but after all what they wanted to hear, what all England, nay, all the world, wanted to hear, was what judgment the Irish Leader would pronounce on the Home Rule Bill. Would he accept it or would he reject it? Would he save or kill the Ministry? It is a significant fact, significant of the man and of his character, that no one outside his own Party knew what his decision was to be until he rose to speak in the debate. Mr. Gladstone himself, when introducing the measure did not know what reception it would meet from the inscrutable and indomitable captain who lead the Irish forces. This, indeed, was Parnell's day of triumph. He had driven the Liberals from office in 1885 by Irish votes because they

refused Home Rule. He had driven the Conservatives from office in 1886 for the same reason, and now he had England's greatest statesman and the entire Liberal Party at his feet confessing that they were wrong in the past, and adopting Home Rule for Ireland as their watchword. He, the hated and despised of four years before, was now the master of Parliament, and the arbiter of the fate of Ministries.

One more scene, and I will pass away from Parnell. It was the 1st of March, 1889. The conspiracy of the London *Times* and Pigott to ruin Parnell by means of forged letters implicating him in the Phoenix Park murder had just broken down. Pigott himself had that day fled the country. Parnell, on leaving the Court, had been escorted through the streets by cheering thousands of Englishmen. As he emerged from that Court, he passed by the spot where Temple Bar had once stood, Temple Bar, upon whose summit in the olden days were displayed the bloody heads of the Geraldines and other Irish chiefs. Never in the history of the country had there been so dramatic an episode. For many long months this terrible accusation, made with all the authority of the greatest newspaper in England, had hung over Mr. Parnell's head. The most skilled experts in handwriting had sworn positively that his was the hand which had penned the damning letters. Belief in his guilt was almost universal in England, and now suddenly the forger had the truth wrung from his lips in the witness chair, and had fled the country to find a few hours afterwards an end to his miserable life by suicide. The reaction in Mr. Parnell's favour was instantaneous and complete. In the House of Commons an Irish debate was proceeding. The unusual crush of Members, and the public excitement outside the building, bore testimony to

the universal desire to see Mr. Parnell, to witness how he would demean himself in his hour of triumph, to hear what he had to say, to pay homage to him as a victor. It was late when Mr. Parnell reached the House. His approach was heralded by cheers in the street, in the lobby, and on his entrance into the Chamber. A few moments afterwards he rose to speak, and then was enacted a scene absolutely without parallel in the history of the House of Commons. Once again, let me quote from an Englishman. The following description of it, written at the time, is from the pen of an Englishman, who, was by no means too friendly to Mr. Parnell or to Ireland:—

“When he stood up with pale set face turned towards the chair, the Irish Members near him began to cheer. Then they rose to their feet. The enthusiasm extended, and sedate English Liberal Members also uprose—a thing never before seen in the House of Commons in honour of an Irish Member. But there was more to follow. Mr. Gladstone stood up and turned to face with welcoming countenance the representative of Ireland. In a second, ex-Ministers right and left followed his lead, and resounding cheers filled the House, whilst Mr. Parnell, pale to the lips, stood waiting till the cheering subsided. It was some minutes before he found an opportunity of speaking, the cheers rising again and again, with waving of hats and clapping of hands. All this while Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues stood with their faces turned towards the animated group of Irishmen.”

During this extraordinary ovation Mr. Parnell remained perfectly calm and impassive. Not even by an inclination of his head did he acknowledge the applause which greeted him from those Englishmen who but yesterday were clamouring for his blood, and when at length silence was restored and he commenced to speak, his usual cold and unimpassioned voice and manner did not show the smallest trace of excitement or emotion. He made no allusion whatever to the marvellous scene which had just been enacted, or to the break down of the conspiracy,

but proceeded quietly, as if nothing had happened, to the discussion of the particular question before the House.

Here was, if you will, a strong, still man, a man to be feared by his foes, a man to be trusted and followed to the death by his friends. A man of grim and stern resolve of unbending nature, unmoved by applause and triumph, as he had been undaunted by hatred and defeat. Never this century did Ireland stand higher than at that moment, and never in the whole history of the British Parliament did there appear a prouder figure, a stronger or more commanding personality.

In many respects Mr. Gladstone was the very antithesis of Parnell. Above and beyond all else, Mr. Gladstone is an orator, incomparably the greatest orator the House of Commons has seen this century. I have heard many great speakers in the Pulpit, at the Bar, and in Parliament, but I never heard one fit, in my opinion, to rank in the same class as Gladstone. John Bright I well remember. His fine presence his incisive and clear cut diction, his resonant voice, his dramatic action—all made it easy to understand how he had earned the title of “Tribune of the People.” But in all these attributes, Mr. Gladstone was his superior, while he had many great intellectual qualities never possessed by Bright at all. I suppose no man ever possessed a more marvellous voice than Gladstone. It was powerful, but that was not the secret of its influence. It was its sweetness and its extraordinary compass. Gladstone could sway an assembly as I believe no other living man could do. I have heard him speaking on a multitude of subjects. Sometimes my sympathies were with him, oftener probably against him. I have heard him nobly vindicating the national cause of Ireland, and I have heard him at other times denounce and overwhelm

with ridicule all those things dearest to my heart ; but I can with truth say I never heard him on any subject without being lost in admiration at his genius, or without experiencing the keenest sense of intellectual enjoyment. With the single exception of John Bright, he was the only orator in Parliament during my fifteen years there. Disraeli, it is true, was always delightful to listen to, keen, satirical witty, appealing irresistibly to a sense of humour and to common sense, but never to the feelings or passions. Gladstone, on the other hand, played upon the passions of an audience at his will. He swayed them to laughter or tears with equal ease. He in truth was the last of the great orators of Parliament. Of good speakers, keen debaters, we have plenty to-day. Chamberlain, Balfour, Harcourt, Asquith, and others, but of orators the British Parliament cannot to-day boast of a single one.

As is the case with all great men Gladstone's character is a many-sided one, and his career as a public man has been full of strange inconsistencies and vicissitudes. A recent writer says of him :—

“ It is sufficiently evident that Mr. Gladstone is one of those great and complex personalities who excite both violent antagonisms and violent enthusiasms, who are the subject of as much misunderstanding as comprehension, and who are continually baffling the dissecting knives of their critics. His career is strewn with what seem to be startling inconsistencies, his character abounds in apparent contradictions. The rising hope of the stern and unbending Tories, he became the most daring Liberal innovator of the century. The author of *The Church in its Relations with the State*, he became the most dangerous foe of Establishment. We have seen him expressing positive loathing for Lord Palmerston, and we have seen him within a Session Lord Palmerston's Chancellor of the Exchequer ; he came into power in 1880 on a wave of Liberal enthusiasm, the result of his agitation against the jingoism of Lord Beaconsfield, and presently his own Government was outrivalling that jingoism in Egypt and

the Soudan ; he who voted steadily for Coercion for Ireland all his life, and always scouted the demands of Home Rulers, introduced the Home Rule Bill of 1886, and surpassed the most extreme Nationalist Member in the vehemence with which he denounced the 'blackguardism and baseness' by which the Union was effected."

In the course of such a career it was inevitable that he should arouse bitter antagonism. If Gladstone was at one time the most powerful and respected man in England, if in some senses he is so still to-day in his retirement, it is also true to say that at other times he was probably the most hated. Even in my short experience I have seen his popularity ebb and flow, I have seen the demeanour of the House of Commons change toward him with the most astounding rapidity.

When the vain-glorious Jingo war spirit, fostered by Disraeli, was at its height, Mr. Gladstone was never one single day safe from insult either in the streets of London or in the House of Commons. A mob broke the windows of his house. He declared himself that he was only able to walk safely to his house with his wife owing to "the protection of the police." His every appearance in public was the signal for hooting and hissing. In the House of Commons the almost daily insults to which he was subjected culminated in a scene which will show you at a glance to what depths of vulgar blackguardism Members of the English Parliament sometimes descend. The following is from the pen of an Englishman :—

"Scene : Division Lobby of the House of Commons. Time : 9.20 p.m. Gladstone is walking along the Lobby having recorded his vote. The Conservative majority in the other Lobby observe him through the glass door, and suddenly set up a yell of execration which could scarcely be more violent if the murderer of Lord Leitrim, flying for sanctuary to Westminster, were discovered skulking in the

Lobby. The crowd increased until it reaches the proportions of forty or fifty English gentlemen, all well educated, many of good birth, who, with hand held to mouth to make the sound shriller, howl and groan while some even shake their fists. Gladstone, startled at the cry, looks up and sees the crowd. He pauses a moment, and then advancing close to the glass door, calmly surveys the yelling mob. On one side, the slight figure drawn up to its full height, and the pale stern face steadfastly turned towards the crowd, on the other the jeering, mocking gesticulating mob. Between them the glass door."

At this time, assuredly, there was no more unpopular man in England. The popular songs of the day were replete with gross vituperation of him. One of these songs was intensely amusing, mingling as it does, a grotesque humour with its savagery. Let me quote a stanza :—

" When the G.O.M. goes down to his doom,
He will ride in a fiery chariot;
And sit in state on a red-hot plate
Between Satan and Judas Iscariot.
Says the Devil, ' We're rather full you see,
But I'll do the best I can ;
I'll let Ananias and Judas free
And take in the Grand Old Man ! ' "

There are two scenes in the House of Commons connected with Gladstone which stand out clear and distinct beyond all others in my memory. One a scene of defeat and humiliation, the other of triumph such as few men have ever achieved within these walls. These two scenes well exemplify the vicissitudes of fortune which even the greatest men have to face in Parliament, and the abrupt and extraordinary changes of feeling and opinion which sway the House of Commons from time to time. The first scene was the defeat of Gladstone's Government in 1885, and the other was the introduction of the second Home

Rule Bill in the year 1893. Both these scenes were the direct result of the Irish National Question.

Mr. Gladstone's Government came into power in 1880 with an overwhelming majority.

In speaking to you about Parnell I have already explained the deadly feud which raged between the Irish Party and the Liberal Government of the day. Coercion was in full swing in Ireland. Almost every one of us had made the acquaintance of plank bed and prison skilly, and we had been waiting for five years for an opportunity of striking back an effective blow. At last the opportunity came. An unpopular Budget was introduced. Certain defections had weakened the ranks of the Government, and at the last moment it became clear that the Irish Members held the balance of power. They exercised it swiftly, relentlessly, and defeated the Coercionist Government. The scene on the announcement of the result of the division baffles description. The central figure, of course, was Gladstone. There he sat, pale as marble, making no effort to conceal the pain, humiliation, and surprise of the moment. All around him there surged and swayed an excited throng, while the air resounded with the most conflicting cries. One universal feeling of triumph seemed to pervade the whole scene. The Liberals themselves were not apparently sorry. They had already deserted Gladstone. It was above all a personal defeat. The old man was seventy-seven years of age, and this was the end of his career. Such was the thought uppermost in every man's mind, and with an almost savage cruelty this thought added zest to the cheers of triumph from his foes. High above all rang the voices of the Irish members shouting "Down with Coercion." They stood upon the benches and shook their clenched hands at the old man, and again and

again reminded him that it was Ireland's vote that had wrought his downfall. Amongst those most wildly excited was one, of whose brief, strange, and sad career I shall have a word to say later—I mean Lord Randolph Churchill—then young, vigorous, and confident of the future. The scene of disorderly and tumultuous triumph lasted for a quarter of an hour or more, and when at last it exhausted itself, and members began to troop out into the lobbies, the old man still sat pale and exhausted upon his seat, the very picture of hopeless old age and overwhelming defeat.

Who could have believed at that moment that eight years afterwards—at the age of eighty-four—this marvellous man would appear again in that House, more powerful, more honoured than ever, still strong in mind and body, moving, as Prime Minister, the first reading of the Home Rule Bill of 1893.

For seven years he had been in opposition. During all that time he had laboured with an energy and a splendid confidence in the future which put to shame many of his younger colleagues. In Parliament he led the opposition with unflagging vigour. In the country he spoke on scores of platforms. Never in his whole career did he give more time and labour to public life. His opponents gazed in wonder at this marvellous old man. They had counted on his disappearance after the defeat of his first Home Rule Bill in 1886. Lord Randolph Churchill described him as “an old man in a hurry,” and plainly and heartlessly indicated his view that the Unionists had only to wait patiently for a little while, and the old man would disappear. What an irony of fate that in the result it was the young man who should have gone and that the old man should still be alive to-day, closely approaching now to his

ninetieth year, in complete command of all his great intellectual faculties, and physically hale and robust. Those years of opposition, from 1886 to 1892, ended in the complete triumph of Gladstone, and when in February, 1893, he rose once more as Prime Minister, to introduce the Home Rule Bill, everyone present realised that they were taking part in one of the most historical scenes ever enacted within the walls of the British Parliament.

As usual on such occasions, the populace assembled in thousands round the House of Parliament. For long hours an immense crowd waited outside Mr. Gladstone's house, and when he emerged, accompanied by the faithful woman who had done so much to help him during his long career, he received a noble ovation, and was escorted in triumph to the doors of Parliament. This was after three o'clock in the afternoon, but from early morning the inside of the building had been the scene of intense excitement. The most eager competition had taken place for seats in the various stranger's galleries, and even the staid and stately peers had shoved and pushed and fought like schoolboys to obtain admittance. The Prince of Wales and his son arrived early. All the centre of the floor of the House had been filled with chairs, and even then there was not room for all the members who overflowed into every passage, and some of whom sat upon the steps of the gangway. At a quarter to four there was but one vacant place—that of the Prime Minister. The intense excitement was evidenced by that subdued movement and eager whispered conversation which the papers in reports of great trials sometimes describes as sensation. Suddenly the echo of a cheer is heard from outside. It comes nearer and louder. All eyes are fixed upon the door, and then, after a moment's pause, the old man enters. The entire

assembly, with the exception of a few Irish Members, friend and foe alike, rose to greet him. Never did he look nobler, stronger, or more vigorous. Eighty-four years old! It seemed impossible to believe. His step had the elasticity and spring of youth; his carriage was as erect as that of a man of twenty; his eye had all the fire of earlier days; and the flush on his cheek, caused by the scene of excitement he had just passed through outside, made him look positively young. I have always thought Gladstone a strikingly handsome man. To-day the leonine quality of his head showed clearer than ever, and as he walked to his seat I could not help thinking that one such scene of triumph as this, one such scene of complete mastery on one side, and honour and homage upon the other, was worth a lifetime of toil and suffering.

Gladstone failed to carry his Home Rule proposals, and he is now spending the last days of his life in quiet and retirement, but his recent action on the Armenian question, and the popular enthusiasm it evoked, show how great a hold he still has upon the imaginations and the hearts of the great masses of the English people. As a public man, posterity will no doubt point to his faults—what man is faultless? But I venture to say he will stand out as one of the greatest orators and statesmen of the British Parliament, and one of the most remarkable men who ever appeared in the whole course of English history. And this testimony is perhaps all the more valuable from the fact that it comes from one who has never been a follower of his, and who has been for the most part a bitter opponent.

Gladstone's career in Parliament, and in public offices, was one of the longest upon record. That of Lord Randolph Churchill was one of the shortest. He was indeed the comet of a season, but during his short career he exhibited qualities

which fascinated the public mind, and made him one of the most interesting personalities of the public life of this generation in England. I knew him well. I respected his abilities I admired his many brilliant qualities, I recognised his kindly nature, and I deeply deplored his sad and untimely end. It was during the early days of Irish obstruction that Lord Randolph first interfered in Parliamentary debate. He became the leader of the Fourth Party, as it was called—a little coterie of four Members, who broke loose from the ordinary discipline of the Tory Party, and aping a kind of Tory democracy, attacked with bitter impartiality the Government of Mr. Gladstone, and the old leaders of the Conservative opposition. This knot of members consisted of Lord Randolph, Mr. Arthur Balfour, the present Leader of the House of Commons, Mr. Gorst, a prominent member of the present Government, and Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, who stands high to-day in the diplomatic service of England as Ambassador to the Court of Spain. In those early days the Irish Members and the Fourth Party, having much the same end in view, were in daily, almost hourly, communication. They sat on the next bench below us, and many was the private consultation we had with them, when planning attacks upon the Government. When, by our combined votes, we overthrew Mr. Gladstone in 1885, and the Conservatives came for a few months into office, we obtained from them, through Lord Randolph Churchill, a promise of abandoning Coercion, and the Crimes Act of 1882 was allowed by them to lapse. More than that, Lord Randolph at once publicly declared that the policy of his Party was to extend to Ireland every measure of self-government given to England, and the new Tory Lord Lieutenant, Lord Carnarvon, immediately upon taking office opened his

famous negotiations with Mr. Parnell on the question of Home Rule. Lord Randolph's opportunity had now come.

From that day forward until he, in a moment of temper, threw it away, he possessed the foremost place in the House of Commons on the Conservative side. When, after the elections of 1886, the Tory Party came back to power, he accordingly was made Leader of the House, a position which had not been filled by so young a man since the days of Pitt. All the old leaders of his Party were set aside in his favour, and it seemed as if he were entering upon a career of infinite possibilities.

Lord Randolph had many great qualities, but he had an ungovernable temper and an overweening opinion of his own power. In a moment of temper, caused by a temporary difference with his Party, and thinking it was impossible for them to do without him, he resigned office. His resignation was accepted, and from that day his career may be said to have closed. He absented himself from Parliament for a considerable time, and when he returned it was evident some fell disease had laid its paralyzing grasp upon him. He was still quite a young man, but he came back strangely aged and bent and broken. I have never witnessed a more pathetic scene. All his old friends assembled to welcome him. It had been arranged he was to commence the debate for the evening, and the knowledge that he was to make his re-entree on the stage upon which he had played so brilliant a part brought together a remarkable assemblage. The Prince of Wales sat in the Peers' Gallery, which was crowded to overflowing. There was but one feeling amongst men of all parties—a desire to give a kindly welcome to the man who had been when in his prime a general favourite. In appearance he was strangely altered. It has recently been stated, and I

believe it was true, that he had taken some drug to help him through the ordeal he had to face. Owing to a strange piece of ill-luck, an unexpected discussion which occupied an hour or more, intervened between him and his speech. During this time he sat the very picture of nervousness and misery. The effect of the drug had time to wear away, and when he finally rose to address the House, members were shocked to see his physical weakness, and to mark the sad havoc made on him by his fell disease. His nervousness was painful. In vain he sought to rouse himself and collect his thoughts. He was inaudible, almost inarticulate. No one could follow his speech. In silence the tortured House, tortured by the spectacle of his evident suffering, sat patiently until at last he abruptly ceased and fell back in his seat. It was pitiful. He was so young. His prospects had but yesterday seemed so bright. He was so brilliant, so full of life and vigour, so masterful, and now he was so utterly crushed and broken. From that day he never recovered. Again and again he strove with pathetic persistence to re-gain his lost position. It was of no avail. He became worse and worse, and finally sank into his grave. All during my experience of Parliament, I know of nothing more pitiful than this story of sudden dazzling success, followed by swift and utter disaster and destruction.

There is one other career, and one only, which I wish to sketch for you before I conclude—a career in some respects a sad one, but which, though it ended in premature death, yet ended in complete and absolute triumph—it was the career of the great demagogue, Charles Bradlaugh.

Bradlaugh's career as an Apostle of Socialism and Atheism is probably well known by you all. His Parliamentary career was indeed a strange one. For five long

years he battled against the House of Commons for his right to a seat within its walls. The great working-class population of Northampton had returned him as their member, as the colleague of the well-known Mr. Labouchere. When he came to the table of the House to be sworn in he claimed the right to make an affirmation, declaring that the words of the oath "So help me God" were meaningless words to him. A Committee of the House considered his claim to be allowed to affirm, and decided against him. Immediately thereupon Bradlaugh appeared again at the table, and this time asked to have the oath administered to him. But he had previously declared his unbelief in the oath, and the House would not now permit him to take it. They declared his seat vacant, and ordered a new election. Northampton returned him again in triumph. Then commenced a struggle which lasted for five years, and ended in the defeat of the House and the victory of Bradlaugh. Repeatedly new elections were ordered. Upon each occasion the constituency returned their recalcitrant member. More than once Bradlaugh was arrested and imprisoned. Upon one occasion the House invoked the assistance of the police, who, after a fierce struggle, dragged him violently resisting out of the Lobby and down the staircase, and thrust him panting and ragged into the street. I well remember this occasion. Bradlaugh that afternoon had addressed an enormous public gathering of his supporters in Trafalgar Square, and had announced to them his intention of proceeding at once to Westminster and forcing his way into the House of Commons. He was escorted by an enormous and excited multitude as far as the Houses of Parliament. Here the gates were shut and the crowd kept outside. Bradlaugh alone was admitted. He entered the building, but was stopped at the door of the

House of Commons by the Sergeant-at-Arms, who informed him he had received instructions from the House not to admit him. Bradlaugh was a man of great height and massive frame, and the Sergeant-at-Arms in his court suit and fancy sword looked like the picture of Jack the Giant Killer gazing up at one of his mighty adversaries. Bradlaugh pushed his way roughly passed, but quick as lightning six burly policemen seized him and commenced attempting to drag him across the Lobby. He fought, indeed, like a giant, and though the odds were so greatly against him it took his six adversaries a long time to remove him. Meantime a crowd of Members gathered round and watched the scene, and I well remember—it was then for the first time my sympathies were enlisted on Bradlaugh's behalf—when I witnessed the disgraceful spectacle of a duly elected representative of the people being kicked, and dragged, and beaten, and torn with brutal force from endeavouring to fulfil his duty to his constituents. In the end, of course, the will of the people triumphed, and in 1885 Bradlaugh was quietly allowed to take his seat. He died in January, 1891. Before his death he had succeeded in completely reversing the opinion of the House in his regard, and had come to be looked up to with attention and respect as an able, industrious, and thoroughly sincere man. The last and most pathetic incident in his strange career took place while he lay upon his death bed, within a few hours of his death. The House of Commons, which had hated and persecuted him, now did a graceful and thoughtful act, though it was but a tardy reparation. It unanimously expunged from its records the resolution of some years before declaring him unfit to take a seat in that assembly. It sent him this message of repentance and sympathy just before he died, and it was the last fact of which he was

conscious before crossing that bourne from which no traveller returns.

I need scarcely say I have not nearly exhausted the subject upon which I have been speaking, but yet I feel I can go no further to-night. If in what I have said I have been able to throw any new light upon the House of Commons, upon its chief characteristics and its leading Members, I shall be amply repaid. Allow me to make one general remark in conclusion. In the main the House of Commons is, I believe, dominated by a rough and ready sense of manliness and fair play. Of course I am not speaking of it as a governing body. In that character it has been towards Ireland always ignorant, and nearly always unfair. I am treating it simply as an assembly of men, and I say of it it is a body where sooner or later every man finds his proper level, where mediocrity and insincerity will never permanently succeed, and where ability and honesty of purpose will never permanently fail.

HUGH O'NEILL.

LECTURE DELIVERED IN THE TOWN HALL, NAAS,

5TH DECEMBER, 1887.

II.

I PROPOSE to devote my lecture to-night to giving a short sketch of the romantic and glorious career of Hugh O'Neill. The subject is a difficult one to treat as it deserves to be treated at the hands of an Irish Nationalist, and many may consider it is too extensive a one to be discussed, except in the most perfunctory manner, in the limited time at the disposal of a lecturer on an occasion such as this. I acknowledge the difficulty of the subject, and I freely admit my utter incapacity to do justice to my theme. Yet I have been tempted to make this selection of a subject by reasons, the cogency of which none of you will deny. I know of no reproach which can be levelled against the Irish nation of to-day more full of humiliation and of bitter truth than the indifference of our people to the past history of this land. The histories of other nations find devoted students amongst the youth of Ireland. The story of Spain when she was the mistress of the world, the glories of France when for centuries the *fleur-de-lis* was the symbol of military renown, the far-off splendours of Roman conquest, and of Grecian art, all engage the minds and excite the enthusiasm of Irish youth, while the history of their own land, which

should be their great source of national inspiration and patriotic zeal, has remained too often an unknown and unopened book. And what a history has it not been? The recent story of our country has, it is true, been a sad one. It is the record of disaster, and famine, and misery. But even in its gloomiest pages, it has never been the record of disgrace, and I am inclined to think that it is from the dark annals of oppression and unfaltering fidelity that Irishmen will draw the lessons of patriotism and of national pride, rather than from the records of military glory or material prosperity. The spectacle of a weak, small, and poor nation, battling for centuries against the most powerful people in Europe, without an ally in the wide universe, continuing the struggle through generations of unbroken disaster, beaten to her knees a thousand times, yet steadily refusing to surrender the priceless treasures which she clasped to her heart, and for which she fought, her ancient nationality, and her ancient faith—surely this is a spectacle to arouse the pride and to enkindle the devotion of her sons. And Ireland's history has not all been disaster and defeat. No nation in Europe can point to-day to so splendid a record in the past as can this Island of ours. In the paths of learning and civilisation and religion Ireland led the way for all the nations of the olden world, and the record of her military glories still throws a halo round her name, which even the disasters of later generations cannot wholly efface. It is the most humiliating reproach which can be cast at our people to-day, that they, who study with eagerness the history of the British Empire, with its countless suppressed nationalities, with its pride of power and wealth, with its heartlessness, and its godlessness, know nothing, or next to nothing, of the ancient glories of their own land, which tell of an uncoquerable nationality,

of an undying faith, and of a people who, for centuries, have preferred poverty to apostacy, and death to national dishonour. Thank God this reproach of indifference to the history of their country is gradually being removed from Irishmen. The great work to which Davis and Duffy and Mitchel devoted years of labour and their brilliant intellects, has to-day revived. In Irish schools, where years ago Irish history was never heard of, it is now being taught to the young sons and daughters of the Irish people.

The story of Hugh O'Neill is the story of the first man who, after the invasion of the Normans, succeeded in uniting Irishmen. It is the story of the first man who abandoned the ideas of provincialism and of tribe distinctions, and conceived the bold idea of creating one Irish nation, north and south, east and west, bound together by the bond of one common nationality; and it is the story of the man who wrested this country from the grasp of the foreigner, and successfully defied the entire power and wealth of England's mighty monarch, Elizabeth. English historians delight in depicting Hugh O'Neill as a hypocrite and a traitor. It will be my task to prove him to have been an honourable and courageous gentleman, a far-seeing statesman, and a matchless general. It is commonly asserted by English writers that O'Neill played a crafty and deceitful part to the English Queen, that, while pretending to be her servile tool and ardent admirer, he was in reality plotting day and night to crush her power in Ireland, and to free his country from her tyrannous sway. I admit the accusation, but I enter a plea of justification. In the circumstances in which he lived, Hugh O'Neill had to make a choice between being falsely true to his country's enemies and being patriotically true to his country and his creed. He chose the better

part, and every thought and action of his entire life, from early boyhood to the grave was dictated by the desire to safeguard the ancient faith, and restore the ancient liberties of his country. This was the master passion of his life, and it is only by bearing this constantly in mind that we can hope to understand his career. The same motive underlay every action of his life, whether he was playing the courtier in London, and winning his way into the favour of the Queen with his flattering Irish tongue, or leading the Confederate army of Ulster from victory to victory amongst the thousand mountain peaks of his own loved Ireland. His policy was akin to that of the great French Cardinal, who was wont to say, "When the lion's skin is too short, eke it out with the fox's." He had to contend against a foe far his superior in wealth and in power, a foe as treacherous and as crafty as it was cruel and unscrupulous. Where it was in his power he opposed force to force, but he did not hesitate also to meet intrigue and treachery with craft and cunning.

When the light of reason dawned upon him he found himself the scion of a noble race whose honour had been basely bartered away. His grandfather had exchanged the title of The O'Neill for the English Earldom of Tyrone. His father had accepted at the hands of his country's enemies the title of Baron of Dungannon, and he, himself, while yet a boy, had been sent to the English Court in the hope that by learning English manners he might learn also to forget the ancient glories of his race, and to hug the gilded chains which hung around his neck. Those who hoped by seducing and corrupting him to make the subjugation of his country assured little knew the mettle of the silent and reserved lad who with calm dignity accepted the favours of the English Court. Though still a

boy the desire of his life was formed. He understood the miserable condition of his country. With burning shame he learned how his grandfather and his father had sold the honour of O'Neill, and how he had been chosen by his country's enemies as a fitting instrument to complete Ireland's dishonour and subjugation. He swore in his secret heart a vow of vengeance. He determined to devote his life to the task of rescuing Ireland. He went to the English Courts. He studied the English language. He learned English modes of warfare. He cultivated the arts of a courtier and insinuated himself into the good graces of Elizabeth, who, mighty and crafty to all the world besides, was to the young Irish prince merely a vain woman, who while wishing to use him as an instrument of her policy, became an instrument for furthering his own. He gravely accepted the English title of baron, which he was told he inherited from his father. He accepted service in the Queen's army, and on his return to Ireland he carried with him the Queen's commission to levy and maintain an army in her name in Ulster. Thus he obtained education, military knowledge, the confidence of the Queen, and the command of an army. He next set about forming alliances with kindred chieftains in the four provinces of Ireland, and having, after years of unremitted labour, succeeded in uniting the great body of his fellow-countrymen, and having formed an alliance with the King of Spain, he declared himself in his true colours, trampled under foot his English titles and his English allegiance, and, as The O'Neill, boldly commenced that war in which he well nigh drove the English from every province in Ireland, and would have finally emancipated his country had not internal treachery and disunion paralyzed his arm, and ultimately broke his noble heart.

In order to understand how matters stood in Ireland when Hugh O'Neill first attained to man's estate, it is necessary to go back briefly to the time of his grandfather, Conn O'Neill.

Conn O'Neill reigned in Ulster when Henry VIII. reigned in England. At that time there was no such thing as an Irish nation. There was no king of all Ireland, there was no National Council. Save the single tie of a common language there was no connection whatever between one portion of the island and another. Each clan had its own territory and its own chief; and the feud between the different clans were often far more bitter than the hatred which should have been common to all of them against the English. Yet at this time by far the greater portion of Ireland paid no allegiance or obedience whatever to the English King or English laws. The English colony strictly confined within the Pale came to be treated much in the same way as if it had been an independent clan; and it had far less power than many of the more powerful tribes of Leinster, Munster and Ulster. Yet, by sure, if slow degrees, English power and English foes were sapping the independence of the tribes. In *Campion's History of Ireland* we read of the disgraceful scene in 1542, when Conn O'Neill, the Fitzpatrick of Upper Ossory, and the O'Briens of Thomond appear before Henry and receive in return for their sworn allegiance brand-new titles, bestowed by Letters Patent, under the Great Seal of England. Conn O'Neill, as the most powerful, received the greatest honours. He was summoned to the King's Court at Greenwich; and there, upon his bended knees, he renounced the title of The O'Neill, and accepted for himself the title of Earl of Tyrone, and for his son Matthew the title of Baron of

Dungannon. Then, having done homage to Henry as King of Ireland, and as Head of the Church, he returned home to Ulster, a disgraced and dishonoured man. He was not long left in doubt as to what his submission meant. The monasteries and possessions of the ancient Church of Ireland were confiscated by Henry, and bestowed plentifully upon all who would renounce their faith and betray their country. This was more than Conn O'Neill could stand, and, accordingly, we find that in spite of his submission he insisted upon protecting the monasteries of Ulster. But, day by day, his power left him. As The O'Neill he was a great power: as Earl of Tyrone he was merely a weak old man. His people distrusted him, and we learn from the ancient chronicles that, at least, he bitterly repented of his folly, and with his dying words enjoined upon his son and heir to re-assert the title and independence of his race. When bestowing his honours upon the O'Neills, Henry had left out of all account Conn's second son, Shane, and in Campion's *History of Ireland* we are told that Shane was "little esteemed and no prooffe." It was this Shane that succeeded Conn, and who went far to redeem the name of O'Neill from the shame which had come upon it. John Mitchel, in his *Life of Hugh O'Neill*, says:—

"Unmindful of court intrigue, and little versed in the love of Saxon heraldry, there was, growing up to manhood, amongst the hills of Ulster, a son of Conn, one of the proudest and fiercest O'Neills that had appeared since he of the Nine Hostages, and his name was Shane. Chasing the wolf and deer in the forests of Tyr-owen, learning from the lips of the bards the ancient glories and achievements of Hy Neal. Shane had grown to believe, with all his soul, that the Kinel Eoghain were the hero race most favoured by heaven, that Tyr-owen was the eye of Erin and the very pride of the earth, and that of all noble and royal titles of honour and sovereignty, by far the most dreaded and illustrious was 'The O'Neill.'

"And behold! just as the impetuous youth had reached manhood,

and feels within him the strength and fierce spirit to uphold the honour of his race, that proud name is to be extinguished. The golden colour of an O'Neill, the sacred chair of Tullogh-oge, are to be made of no account, lost or forgotten in the unheard of peerages of the stranger. By the soul of Con More this must not be ! Let his father plume himself in his foreign feathers, let Matthew maintain, as best he may, his estate tail and coronet of Dungannon, he, Shane, will be an O'Neill—THE O'NEILL."

He had not long to wait. His father soon sank a broken-spirited man to his grave. In the disturbance which followed, Matthew of Dungannon fell, and Shane, the Proud, reigned supreme. His only possible rival was Matthew's son, young Hugh, who was brought over to England at an early age to be educated and trained, until he should be fitted, as the enemies of Ireland fondly believed, to return to give the last deadly blow to his country's freedom. How he returned, and what sort of a blow he struck, we will see presently.

Meantime, Shane ruled Ulster with a turbulent strength. He kept his dominions safe from the armies and the Reformed Church of the Saxon, but, with a singular fatality, his greatest deeds of military renown were performed against his own countrymen of other clans. He waged war against the O'Reillys of Cavan, and perpetuated the ancient feud of his family with the O'Donnells of Tyrconnell. He invaded the territory of the Maguires of Fermanagh, and carried on a continual strife with the Scots. The result was that he surrounded himself with bitter and implacable enemies of his own race. He did not see, as was seen afterwards by his far greater nephew, that the only hope of Irish freedom lay in a union amongst Irishmen. The consequence was that Shane O'Neill, brave-hearted and invincible though he was, did not advance the National cause of his country in the slightest

degree. When Elizabeth ascended the English throne she determined to crush Shane O'Neill. Several military expeditions having failed to subdue him, an effort was made to bribe him into surrender. They offered him every title and honour he fancied if only he would renounce the name of "The O'Neill." He proudly and disdainfully refused.

The Abbe M'Geoghan, in his history, gives a copy of the letter in which Shane replied to the proposals made to him by Elizabeth's Commissioners. In it he said :—

"If Elizabeth, your mistress, is Queen of England, I am O'Neill, King of Ulster. I never made peace with her without having been previously solicited to it by her. I am not ambitious of the abject title of Earl—both my family and birth raise me above it. I will not yield precedence to anyone. My ancestors have been Kings of Ulster ; I have gained that kingdom by the sword, and by the sword I will maintain it."

Then Elizabeth determined on a plan whereby out of his own quarrels his destruction should be accomplished. After a campaign of unusual misfortune for him, he went, attended only by a handful of men, to the encampment of the Scots in Antrim. They, at the instigation of the English, received him with a show of hospitality, but that very night fell upon him and his followers and cut them to pieces. Shane's head was sent to Dublin, where it was gibbeted on Dublin Castle, and thus ended Shane the Proud. Then Queen Elizabeth proceeded to abolish, by Act of Parliament, the very name of The O'Neill, and fondly believed that at long last, by the favour of Providence and the aid of young Hugh, then at her court in England, the complete subjugation of Ireland was at hand.

She invested Tirlough O'Neill, a grandson of Con More with the Chieftaincy of Ulster, which he was to hold as her

vassal and subject, and meantime she herself carefully watched the training of the young Hugh, who, when his education was complete, was to be sent home to Ulster as the "Queen's O'Neill." Of the career of the young Hugh at the English Court we have but scanty information. We know, on the authority of Camden, that being a youth of goodly presence and winning speech he was in high favour with the Queen. The English historian, though he calls him the arch rebel and a hypocrite, is fain to acknowledge his great qualities. He says:—

"His industry was great, his soul large, and fit for the weightiest business. He had much knowledge in military affairs, and a profound dissembling heart, so as many deemed him born either for the great good or ill of his country."

Yes, it was true. He had a "large soul" and a "profound dissembling heart." He well knew the value and the meaning of the honours lavished upon him. He understood what the golden chains of England meant when hung around the neck of an Irish Chief. He knew the design of his country's enemies to use him for this shameful task, and his very soul almost burst with indignation and disgust. But he had much to learn in England: their modes of warfare, their diplomacy, their statesmanship, and their generalship, and he held his peace and bided his time. There is something almost awe-inspiring in contemplating this young man in the midst of the frivolities and honours of a licentious court, pampered in the very lap of royalty, surrounded by luxury and flattery in every shape, silently hugging to his heart his sense of wrong and hatred, and patiently waiting for a day of vengeance and retribution. Those shallow English tyrants who believed in that day, as so many of them do still, that "the jingle of the guinea

helps the hurt that honour feels," soon learned the bitter truth:—

“There never yet was human power
That could withstand it unforgiven,
The patient watch and vigil long
Of him who treasures up a wrong.”

At last the time came for him to return to his country ; his education was complete. The next part of his work was to unite the divided clans of Ulster. It was a difficult task, and it took years to accomplish. While steadily and quietly engaged upon it, he carefully maintained his character as the friend of Elizabeth. In the Geraldine war and afterwards in the campaign against the Scots of Antrim he commanded troops in the Queen's army. Yet, while he seemed to be an instrument in the hands of the English, he was in reality using the Deputy and the forces of Elizabeth to subdue his own enemies, and to render his power supreme in Ulster. For years he worked silently, strengthening his position, and winning the hearts of the clansmen of Tyrowen. Then he paid another visit to the English Court at Greenwich. Hume tells us he feigned “love and desire to Elizabeth, and addressed her in the style of passion.” He accepted from her the Earldom of Tyrone, and affectionately advised her strictly to enforce the law against the “pestilent and rebellious name of The O'Neill.” On his return to Ulster he was commissioned to keep on foot six companies of soldiers.

The Abbe McGeogan tells us :—

“The six companies he trained to the art of war, and according as they became well disciplined, sent them home with rewards. Those dismissed were replaced with others, who were instructed in like manner. He gave fire arms to the country people also, to induce

them to hunt, and thereby made them expert in the use of them, so that in a short time almost the whole province was trained to arms. He obtained the consent of the Council to bring over plates of lead from England under the pretext of roofing his castle at Dungannon, and had them converted into bullets. Besides the private dépôts which were to furnish the wants of the troops under his orders, he had others into which he secretly collected provisions and warlike stores."

About this time good fortune afforded him an opportunity for which he had long sought, of opening negotiations with Spain. Some ships belonging to the famous and ill-fated Armada were driven ashore upon the coast of Ulster. The Spaniards were received with honour at Dungannon by Hugh O'Neill, and on their return to their own land, brought with them overtures to King Philip, which led to an alliance between him and the confederate army of the North. Things were prospering well with O'Neill, and but one thing more seemed necessary to enable him at long last to unfurl the Red Hand of O'Neill, and give battle to his country's enemies. That one thing was an alliance with the O'Donnells, Chiefs of Tyrconnell. Between the O'Neills and the O'Donnells, the two most powerful clans in Ulster, a bitter feud had raged for generations. This O'Neill determined to end. His first step was a characteristic one; to woo and wed the fair daughter of the house of Tyrconnell, Judith O'Donnell. The second was to cultivate the friendship of her brother, the famous Red Hugh. The Chief of Tyrconnell was an old man, and it was to the younger generation that O'Neill looked for assistance. Besides this, young Hugh O'Donnell, though only yet a boy in his teens, was already widely known for his daring spirit and his bitter hatred of the English. If this brave youth should become the ruler of his clan, and if the feuds of generations being buried these two Hughs

should join in arms, then, indeed, not only Ulster's, but Ireland's freedom were secured. The English Viceroy seems to have foreseen the danger. Red Hugh had not the profound dissembling heart of his new brother-in-law and friend. He was out-spoken and open in his hostility to the English. One day he was inveigled on board a British ship, on the pretence that she contained a cargo of Spanish wine, and before he well knew what had happened he found himself a prisoner on his way to Dublin Castle.

The capture of O'Donnell was a heavy blow to the plans and hopes of O'Neill. But while it caused him to delay, it never for a moment tempted him to abandon the execution of his design. He occupied himself strengthening his position, and healing the feuds of rival chiefs; slowly, but surely, moulding out of those discordant elements that Irish nation, which it was the dream of his life to build up. After no less than five years of weary waiting and preparing, one day glad tidings of great joy reached the Castle of Dungannon. Hugh O'Donnell had escaped, and was even then on his way to Tyrconnell. It was true. O'Neill hastened to welcome him. The clans of Tyrconnell assembled to give a Royal greeting to their young chief. His father abdicated in his favour, and Red Hugh was installed in the seat of power as Prince of Tyrconnell. The moment for which Hugh O'Neill had dreamed and prayed, and laboured, from early youth, through years of bitter humiliation and heart burning, had at last arrived.

Tirlough O'Neill, who held the nominal chieftaincy of the clan, died, and with all the pomp and solemnity of the olden time, in the sacred chair of royalty on the Rath of Tulloughoge, surrounded by his warriors and bards and priests, Hugh was invested with the title of The O'Neill, and publicly renounced the title of Earl, removed the mask,

and openly declared against Elizabeth and for Ireland. As if by magic, Ulster sprang to arms. Ancient feuds were forgotten, ancient hatreds were buried; one thought alone filled men's minds, one feeling alone swelled their breasts. At last Ireland had leaders wise enough and strong enough to rid her of her tyrants; at last the day of liberty had dawned, and Hugh O'Neill was hailed the saviour of his country. Amazement and dismay spread amongst the English. At the Royal Court at Greenwich, feelings deeper than mere resentment were felt against O'Neill. Was this his gratitude for the favours of the Queen, that he, who had poured out his vows of devotion and passion at her feet should now dare the unholy task of freeing his country from her tyrannical sway? It was monstrous; and, accordingly, no words are too strong to be employed by English historians. O'Neill was a traitor, a rebel, an arch-hypocrite, and, in the words of the gentle Spenser, a frozen snake. Right little he cared for the resentment of the English, or the wounded vanity of the Queen; he had devoted his life to freeing his people, and he thanked God the day had come when he could end the miserable and humiliating farce of hiding his hatred and contempt under the guise of English titles and the arts of an English courtier.

The contagion rapidly spread from Ulster to the other provinces, from Leinster, and Munster, and Connaught, speedily came promises of support and assistance to Duggan, and the English Viceroy deeming it prudent to abstain for a while from an open attack, endeavoured, with characteristic cowardice and folly, to strike at O'Neill by treachery. Overtures were made to Red Hugh O'Donnell, promising him pardon, provided he severed himself from O'Neill. The offer of pardon was scouted by Red Hugh

and deeply resented as an insult. The Irish princes, seeing the hesitation of the English, commenced forthwith offensive operations against their enemies. O'Donnell burst into Connaught, driving the English before him like a whirlwind, and making alliances on all sides with the Connaught clans.

O'Neill, on his side, proceeded to the English fortress of Portmore on the Blackwater, the strongest position of the enemy in Ulster, which he utterly demolished. From thence he marched to Monaghan, and as he was about to commence its seige, news reached him that Sir Henry Wallop craved an interview with him on the part of the Queen. O'Neill haughtily refused to see any ambassador, save at the head of his army, and, eventually, they met in the presence of both armies on an open plain. O'Neill demanded, as the first condition of peace, that all pretences of English interference in the Government or religion of Ulster should cease, and resolutely refused even a short truce, unless this much was first conceded. The interview ended abruptly. The English ambassadors returned to Dublin, and the Irish chiefs in their absence were placed upon trial for treason, convicted, and proclaimed as traitors. Rewards were set upon their heads, and then at last reinforcements having reached them from England the English generals advanced upon Ulster. The first pitched battle of the campaign took place about five miles outside Monaghan, at a place called Clontibret, or the Lawn of the Spring. The English were commanded by Sir John Norreys, the most experienced general in Elizabeth's service. The best account of the battle which we possess is that given by John Mitchel. In it he said :—

“Twice the English infantry tried to make their way to the river, and twice were beaten back, their gallant leader each time charging at their head. The general, and his brother, Sir Thomas, were both wounded in the conflicts, and the Irish counted the victory won, when a chosen body of English horse, led on by Segrave, a Meathian officer, of gigantic bone and height, spurred fiercely across the river and charged the cavalry of Tyrowen, commanded by their prince in person. Segrave singled out O'Neill, and the two leaders laid lance in rest for deadly combat. While the troops on each side lowered their weapons and held their breath, awaiting the shock in silence. The warriors met, and the lance of each was splintered on the other's corselet; but Segrave again dashed his horse against the chief, flung his giant frame upon his enemy, and endeavoured to unhorse him by the mere weigh of his gauntleted hand. O'Neill grasped him in his arms, and the combatants rolled together in that fatal embrace to the ground :—

Now gallant Saxon, hold thine own,
No maiden's arms are round thee thrown.

There was one moment's deadly wrestle and a death groan; the shortened sword of O'Neill was buried in the Englishman's groin beneath his mail. Then from the Irish ranks arose such a wild shout of triumph as those hills had never echoed before; the still thunder cloud burst into a tempest—those equestrian statues became as winged demons; and with their battle cry of *Lám na gCúig abú*, and their long lances poised in eastern fashion above their heads, down swept the cavalry of Tyrowen upon the ranks of the astonished Saxon. The banner of St. George wavered and went down before the furious charge. The English turned their bridal reins and fled headlong over the stream, leaving the field covered with their dead—and worse than all, leaving with the Irish that proud red cross banner, the first of its disgraces in those Ulster wars.”

This defeat, for the time being, completely paralyzed the English. For the remainder of that year no further military expedition returned to cross the path of O'Neill, and the closing days of 1595 saw the Irish power supreme in both Ulster and Connaught. England then once more opened negotiations with the Irish chiefs. A commission once more proceeded to Ulster and O'Neill was invited to a

conference. These tiresome and tame negotiations sorely tried the patience of the fiery Red Hugh who could hold no parley whatever with his country's enemies. But O'Neill, always prudent and far-seeing, knew the value of delay. He was in communication with the King of Spain ; without foreign aid he despaired of being able ultimately to cope with Elizabeth's power, and he desired above all things to temporise awhile with the enemy so that his Spanish allies might have time to reach the shores of Ireland. Consequently he consented to meet the English commission, and while assuring them of his desire to live at peace with the Queen he reiterated his demand for the practical independence of Ulster. The Commissioners withdrew, and after months of negotiations—months most valuable to O'Neill's plans—they received the sanction of Elizabeth to conclude a peace with the Irish rebel upon the terms demanded by him, and fixed the 2nd of April for the ratification of the treaty. But O'Neill's object from the first had been the independence, not of Ulster, but of all Ireland, and he refused to be bribed from his allegiance to the cause of National freedom. When April 2nd arrived O'Neill refused to meet the Commissioners and forthwith recommenced active hostilities. Armagh was at this time still in the hands of the English and O'Neill determined forthwith to recover its possession. He laid siege to the town, but not caring to spend the necessary time in a blockade, he had recourse to a stratagem to hasten its fall, and it speedily fell into his hands. The Abbe M'Geoghan thus describes what ensued :—

“ He got some of his men, both horse and foot, to assume the uniform of the English who were killed, and ordered them to march with English banners towards a ruined monastery that was within a gunshot of Armagh. The Prince pursued these supposed English

with the rest of his troops within view of the garrison ; both parties began a discharge of their musketry, loaded only with powder, whereupon, the men as instructed, fell upon every side, without sustaining any injury. This sham battle soon attracted the attention of the garrison of Armagh. Stafford, the commander, gave orders that half of the garrison should take up arms and advance rapidly up to the field of battle to the relief of their supposed countrymen. The English found not only O'Neill's troops, but those to whose succour they had come, drawn up in order of battle and ready to charge them. The English between two fires were cut to pieces within view of the garrison, and the town at once surrendered."

By this time almost the entire of Leinster as well as Ulster and Connaught was in arms on the side of O'Neill, under the command of Owen O'More and Fiach O'Byrne, and it may be said with accuracy that the greater part of Ireland was in the power of the Irish. At Tyrrell's Pass, in the County of Meath, one of the Leinster armies, under the command of Richard Tyrrell, utterly demolished one section of the English army, which was on its way to the north ; while in Connaught, Red Hugh O'Donnell completely overawed and held in check the forces of the Queen, shut up in one or two fortresses. Once again in pitched battle, O'Neill shattered an English army this time at Drumfluich, close by Benburb, where, a couple of generations later, his nephew, Owen Roe, laid the British standard in the dust.

Once again we read of negotiations and overtures of peace proceeding from Elizabeth. This time the ambassador was no less a personage than the great Earl of Ormond. He met O'Neill at Dundalk, and this time the terms of the Irish Chief had become more ambitious. They were, first :—

" Perfect freedom of religion, not only in Ulster but throughout Ireland ; then reparation for spoil and ravish done upon the Irish country ; and finally, entire and undisturbed control by the Irish chiefs over their own territories and peoples."

At the end of eight weeks' truce, authority arrived from the Queen, giving Ormond power to offer her "gracious pardon" to O'Neill, on condition that he disbanded his forces and renounced the name of The O'Neill. We can well imagine the scorn with which this offer of "pardon" was received by the victorious Prince, and with what amused contempt he read of terms which meant surrender on his part just in the moment of triumph. He remained quiescent until the truce had expired, and then once more unfurled the dread Red Hand banner as his answer to the insulting proposals of his enemies. It is a significant proof of the power of O'Neill, and the dread entertained of him by the haughty Elizabeth, that his contemptuous refusal of her overtures had no other effect than making her all the more solicitous to conciliate him.

At the very moment when he rejected with supreme scorn the offer of pardon, we read that Elizabeth with all due formalities, sealed with the great seal of England, and signed with her own royal hand, the parchment pardon of Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone and Leader of the Irish Rebellion, and sent it by special messenger to Ulster. It was never received by O'Neill, who took good care to evade the envoy who carried it. Yet, in one sense, it served its purpose for the English. Knowing O'Neill's reliance upon Spanish aid, the English took pains to publish through Europe the news that he had received the gracious pardon of Elizabeth, and thus induced King Philip to believe that the Irish Chief had handed in his submission, and that succour to him would be of no avail now. So sedulously were these false reports circulated that the aid for which O'Neill was waiting was delayed until it became of but very doubtful value indeed.

Ormond now determined that a supreme effort should be

made to break O'Neill's power, and Marshal Bagnal advanced upon Ulster with a gigantic army composed of the choicest forces in Elizabeth's service. He encountered O'Neill near the banks of the Blackwater, at *Beal-an-ataburœ*, or the mouth of the Yellow Ford. Here the greatest battle of the Campaign was fought, and here the power of England met with its most decisive and crushing disaster. The Abbe M'Geoghan gives the following details of the battle:—

“The battle commenced and the route was terrible. Marshal Bagnal, with twenty-four of his principle officers, and two thousand of his army, were killed upon the spot, and the remainder of his forces put to flight. The loss of the English was heightened by an accident which happened in the beginning of the action in the quarter where the reserve forces lay. The powder magazines having taken fire, five hundred men at least were blown up. The spoils that were wrested from them were also very considerable. Twelve thousand pieces of gold—their warlike stores—thirty-four stand of colours—all their instruments of war—all their artillery and provisions of every kind fell into the hands of the Irish.”

Fifteen hundred English soldiers were made prisoners, and with a clemency that speaks volumes for the honour and humanity of O'Neill, were, when disarmed, sent in safety to the Pale. This victory of *Beal-an-ataburœ* raised to the very highest pitch the hopes of the Irish people. Its fame spread through the island like wildfire, and on all sides those who had been wavering came in and joined the Irish Chiefs. O'Neill was everywhere sung and toasted as the deliverer of his country. He was now more than ever the recognised leader, the heart and brain of the Irish Confederacy, and with pride and thanksgiving he at last saw the hated power of England prostrated in the dust, its armies well-nigh annihilated, its military stores captured, its Irish allies either crushed or brought back to the side of

Ireland and honour. Many Lords of English descent, but of Catholic faith, regarding him as the champion of Catholicity, joined hands with him. Munster at last roused from her lethargy, and under the Fitzgeralds, and Butlers, and O'Sullivans, took up arms in the common cause, and Ireland north, south, east, and west, was at last united, while there was no spot in any of the four provinces where the troops of the Queen could dare to take the field.

But Elizabeth was not the sovereign to give up the struggle. The reverses which had befallen her arms made her all the more determined to crush the Irish rebels. The ill-fated Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, next tried his hand at O'Neill, both by diplomacy and armed force, but with as little success as had attended his predecessors. Then O'Neill, having received from the Pope a message full of sympathy, and a present of twenty-two thousand pieces of gold, started on one of the most extraordinary journeys ever undertaken by warrior or monarch. He visited every province in Ireland, summoning the Irish Chiefs to meet him to concert plans for the defence of the country and the government of the people. Everywhere he was received with enthusiasm. The people thronged round him, calling blessings on the head of their deliverer, and it seemed as if, once and for ever, foreign domination and internal dissension were banished from Irish soil. Then he marched with his victorious troops, and accompanied by all the nobility of Ireland, to the Abbey of Holy Cross, and there before the altar, to defend which they were ready to sacrifice life and liberty, he and they consecrated their swords to the service of their ancient faith and their ancient nationality. Then he turned his face homeward, and calmly awaited the next move of the English.

That next move was the most formidable they had yet

made. Lord Mountjoy, the ablest man in the dominions of Elizabeth, and a distinguished soldier, was despatched to Ireland to take command. He was invested with supreme power. He had placed at his disposal every available soldier of the Queen, and unlimited money. His instructions were short and simple. No toil, or peril, or blood, no treasure, or fraud, or deception, was to be spared which was necessary to crush O'Neill.

Simultaneously with the arrival of Mountjoy in Dublin, Sir Henry Dowera arrived in Lough Foyle with a powerful armament.

O'Neill was busy defending the frontier line of Ulster, and O'Donnell was in Connaught. Dowera's troops disembarked, and without any considerable opposition succeeded in reaching Derry, which they at once set about fortifying. From this fatal moment fortune seemed to desert the Irish troops. Not that they anywhere sustained any crushing defeat, but such was the activity and restless daring of Mountjoy that the Irish army was kept day and night on the defensive, and gradually but surely the English troops pushed on to and across the frontier, and into the heart of Ulster. But it was not on the tented field that the overthrow of O'Neill was to be accomplished. Mountjoy trusted not to steel, but to treachery, for the subjugation of Ireland.

The advice given by the celebrated Lord Bacon to the ill-fated Essex, though neglected by him, became the main policy of his more astute successor. Bacon had recommended what he called the "princelie policie" of weakening the Irish by disunion, and cheating them by a temporary toleration of the Catholic religion. This policy Mountjoy at once put in force. He put a sudden stop to all attempt at religious persecution, and thereby sought to induce the

people to believe that the freedom of their ancient faith did not depend on the success of the arms of O'Neill. In addition to this every engine of deception was set at work. The ambition of one chieftain, the avarice of another, the fears of a third were acted upon, and, alas! the day, even in Ulster itself, and amongst the proud clans of Tyrowen and Tyrconnell, traitors and cowards soon appeared.

Niall O'Donnell and Art O'Neill basely sold themselves for English gold, and their example was speedily followed in Munster by Dermot O'Connor and Florence McCarthy. Showers of gold began to fall, perfidy and intrigue of every kind were set on foot, assassination and threats of assassination were used without scruple, and at last it became evident to O'Neill, who was busily employed withstanding the advance of Mountjoy in Ulster, that the National party, which it had been the great work of his life to build up, was fast breaking to pieces. But one hope now remained.

Should the King of Spain at long last keep his promise and send a friendly expedition to the assistance of Ireland, all might yet be well, and the infamous network of treachery which Mountjoy was spreading around might be easily torn to pieces. This last hope of his was in one sense realised. A Spanish expedition landed on the coast of Ireland, but its landing, so far from assisting the cause of Irish liberty, hastened the downfall of O'Neill and the triumph of his ruthless and perfidious enemies.

On the 23rd of September, 1601, a Spanish fleet containing 6,000 men, under the command of Don Juan d'Aguila, landed near Kinsale and took immediate possession of the town. The choice of a place for landing was fatally inappropriate, and the policy of remaining inactive at Kinsale while messengers were despatched to O'Neill and

O'Donnell requesting them to march thither from Ulster and Connaught, was, in the circumstances of the case, little better than madness.

The first result was that the English speedily assembled round the walls of Kinsale an army of overwhelming strength; the next was that O'Neill and O'Donnell were forced to march away leaving their possessions in the north and west undefended.

O'Neill at a glance saw the trap into which he was about to walk, but he saw also that the only mode of escape was to abandon his Spanish allies to their fate, and to such a course disaster, defeat, death itself seemed preferable. The marvellous marches of O'Neill and O'Donnell from Ulster and Connaught to Kinsale will for ever be read with wonder and admiration. How they formed a junction close by the English camp, how they for the first time disagreed upon the order of battle, how O'Neill waived his better judgment and yielded to the less prudent plans of O'Donnell, how hour after hour for the entire of one long day the battle raged, and how in the end, for the first time, defeat, crushing, ruinous defeat, rested upon the arms of the Irish, it is needless to narrate. It is a story full of humiliation and pain. Utterly broken the Irish army reeled back from Kinsale, and the Spanish troops capitulated and were allowed to return to their own land.

O'Donnell, stung to madness, took ship for Spain to explain the disaster to King Philip, and to ask for a further expedition, while O'Neill, still full of courage, if not of hope, retired back to Ulster to recruit his shattered ranks from the sons of Tyrowen. But disaster from that day outdogged his steps. In the moment of defeat deserters and traitors sprang up on every side. The magic of his name seemed gone, the spell of his successes had been

broken, and day by day his power declined. Roderic O'Donnell was no compensation for the loss of the dauntless Red Hugh, and when at last news reached Ireland from Spain that the gallant young chief, the beloved of Tyrconnell and the hope of Ireland—the right arm of O'Neill—had suddenly died at Valladolid, there fell over Hugh O'Neill a shadow as of the grave, and he felt that from that moment the struggle was over, the hope of his life was blasted, and all that remained for him now to do was

“To look around and chose his ground
And lay him down to rest.”

Meantime fire, famine, and slaughter were let loose upon Ireland. Right and left went the armies of Mountjoy slaughtering the people and laying waste the country, until, in the words of the secretary of the English commander, famine and pestilence spread over the land, the crops were utterly destroyed, and thousands of unburied corpses lay rotting in the once fertile valleys of Munster and Ulster. With breaking heart O'Neill witnessed the torture and misery of his country, and at last hoping to end these horrors, even though it be by the sacrifice of his own pride, he made overtures of peace. Eagerly Lord Mountjoy seized upon the chance of bringing the redoubtable O'Neill to his knees. On the 30th of March, 1603, the treaty of Mellifont was signed by O'Neill and Elizabeth's deputy. By it the Irish people were assured full and free exercise of their religion, and the Irish Chiefs the undisturbed possession of their lands. The war of extermination then raging was to cease, and in exchange for these favours O'Neill was to renounce the name of The O'Neill and to swear allegiance to the English Queen. It is not a pleasant scene to contemplate, yet it seems to me that those who blame O'Neill

for this compromise are ungenerous to a noble-hearted man, and unjust to a wise and far-seeing statesman. His power was completely broken. Had he consulted his own feelings we may be sure that proud neck of his would never have stooped to the power of England, and his own hand would have probably ended a life whose one motive was now destroyed. But he had to consider his people. By a sacrifice far greater than that of life he could obtain peace for Ireland, and it might be peace with honour and with a promise of religious freedom. That sacrifice he made, and I think in making it he proved only the depth of his love for his country and his utter forgetfulness of self. At the moment when the Treaty of Mellifont was concluded Elizabeth was lying dead, though O'Neill knew it not. The moment the treaty was signed conciliation became the policy of the English rulers of Ireland, and although this treaty soon afterwards met the same fate as every other treaty ever made between England and this country, still O'Neill had the satisfaction of seeing, as the result of his surrender, peace restored and religion unmolested. It was not, however, to last long.

In July, 1605, King James issued the famous, or rather the infamous, proclamation in which he "declared to his beloved subjects in Ireland that he would not admit any such liberty of conscience as they were made to expect." Then by degrees recommenced his persecution of the Catholics. O'Neill was living in sad retirement in his old home, where he received information that he was about to be charged with contemplating a new rebellion, and as he had no remaining hope of resistance, and no stomach for any further protestations of loyalty, he, accompanied by Roderick O'Donnell, their wives and sons, took ship in Lough Swilly and sailed for Flanders, then proceeded to

Normandy, and finally to Rome, where Pope Paul V. received them with consideration and honour. Thus Hugh O'Neill, old, broken-hearted and deserted, left the shores of Ireland to whose freedom he had devoted his whole life and heart. The reverend writers of *Annals of the Four Masters* say:—

“It is certain that the sea has not borne, and the wind has not wafted in modern times a number of persons in one ship more eminent, illustrious, or noble in point of genealogy, heroic deeds, valour, feats of arms, and brave achievements than they. Would that God had but permitted them to remain in their patrimonial inheritance until their children should arrive at the age of manhood. Woe to the heart that meditated, woe to the mind that conceived, woe to the council that recommended the project of this expedition.”

Unfortunately, we know little of the last days of O'Neill's life. They were spent in sad wanderings through the Eternal City. Blindness at last overcame the old warrior chief, and finally in 1616 he died at Rome, where to this day the prayers of countless Irish pilgrims are poured out over the tomb.

This sketch of Hugh O'Neill has necessarily been hurried and prefunctory. Yet I hope I have said enough to recall to your minds the chief incidents of his career, and to show the injustice of the character for hypocrisy and deceit which English writers enviously attribute to him. I trust the day will never come when Irishmen will read without a thrill of pride and enthusiasm of Clontibret and Beal-an-*atáburóe*, or fail to be moved by the marvellous qualities and the melancholy end of the great Chief of Tyrowen. A couple of generations later, Owen Roe revived the glories of the O'Neills, and the weird legends of Tyrowen and Tyrconnell to this day people many a lovely valley, and many a rugged mountain fastness, with the spirits of the

great departed. I once stood on the summit of Royal Ailech—

“Where she sits ever more like a queen on her throne
And smiles on the valleys of green Innishowen.”

And as I looked upon one of the most lovely panoramas which the universe could afford, I felt my very soul stirred by the legends of the place. At my feet lay Derry city, which Dowera had made a citadel of English power, which through long centuries had been the stronghold of the enemies of Ireland, but which to-day is ranged at last upon the side of National independence. Beyond there stretched Lough Swilly, over whose waters sailed Hugh O'Neill, and whose bosom has since that day borne away from Ireland that they loved so many thousands of other exiles bound for distant shores. In the distance, on one side, lay Tyrconnell, dark and mountainous, and further away Tyrowen, stretched fair and smiling in the sun. Centuries had passed over this land since Hugh O'Neill and Hugh O'Donnell fought and died for its freedom, yet through all these ages the self-same struggle has gone on without a break through every generation which has passed. The chieftains were dead, but the clansmen lived and the old spirit of Nationality, the old hatred of the rule of the foreigner survived with them. As I stood there musing on the past and dreaming of the future I was told the old legend of Ailech. I was told of the troop of Hugh O'Neill's horsemen who lie in magic sleep in the dark cave under that hill; how these bold troopers only wait to have the spell removed to rush to the aid of their country, and I heard of the peasant who, wandering accidentally into the cave, found them lying beside their horses fully armed and holding their bridles in their hands, and that one of them lifting his head, asked “Is the time come?”

"Is the time come?" It is the question which has welled up from the hearts of every generation from the days of Hugh O'Neill until this moment. The blessed time when by her own bravery and virtue, our country will be able to work out for herself to the full the glorious future which the Princes of Tyrowen and Tyrconnell foresaw for a united Ireland. Is the time come? Once, thrice, say oftener, since the days of Hugh O'Neill, the allotted time of National suffering seemed about to end, but as often disaster came, and the horsemen of Ailech waked not from their slumber. Is the time come yet? Have we learned as yet the lessons of our history, the value of self-restraint and self-reliance, the absolute necessity for forbearance and toleration. I believe in my heart we are nearer to-day to a united nation that at any time since *Beal-an-ataburóe*. We have a chief as far seeing and as intrepid as Hugh O'Neill, and we have allies in every freedom-loving nation in the world. While we have united ourselves, we have divided the ranks of our hereditary enemies, and have succeeded in winning the hearts and convincing the minds of at least one-half the people of Great Britain. A little further struggle, and the work of Hugh O'Neill and Red Hugh O'Donnell will be completed. A little further patience and courage and wisdom, and the time will have come at last, God grant we may all live to see it, when the charmed sleep of the horsemen of Ailech will be broken, and the nations of the world will welcome within their ranks the most ancient and sorely tried of their sisters, her honour vindicated, her martyrs justified and her freedom won.

WAS THE LATE LAND LEAGUE RESPONSIBLE FOR CRIME ?

LECTURE DELIVERED IN MELBOURNE, VICTORIA,
ON 13TH JUNE, 1833.

III.

MR. CHAIRMAN, Ladies and Gentlemen,—You will, I am sure, pardon me if I commence my remarks to-night by repeating a statement which I made a few days ago. I wish to repeat the statement that neither now, nor at any future time, will I enter upon any vindication of myself. Accusations have been made against me personally in this city—accusations of a gross and libellous character, but I refuse to notice them. To those accusations which impute to me dishonourable motives and sympathy with crime, I have only one answer, and that is my contempt. But the duty which I am called upon to fulfil to-night is far different. Like many another public duty, it is an intensely unpleasant one ; but I feel it incumbent upon me not to shrink from the performance of what appears to me a manifest duty, not only to my absent colleagues and the cause which I advocate, but to the Irish people of these colonies, every one of whom is included in the accusation of those who say that money is being subscribed in this land for criminal objects. I ask this audience to bear with me, while I deal as calmly as I can with the accusations against the late Land League, and

the present leaders of the National movement. Let me try if I can fairly state what they are. As I take it, the first is that the late Land League was responsible for outrage generally from its very inception. The second is, that what is called in journalistic parlance the "terrible indictment" of Mr. Parnell by Mr. Forster remains unanswered. The third seems to be that the Land League and the present leaders of the people were responsible, by sympathy, and even by connection, for the deplorable assassinations in the Phoenix Park. Fourth, that the money subscribed to the Land League has never been accounted for, and may have been used for illegal and criminal purposes. And the last and most absurd of them all is that the leaders of the present movement are responsible for what I might call the "dynamite policy." Now I think any fair man will acknowledge, that I have impartially stated the main accusations against the cause of Ireland and the Irish leaders. Let me deal with them separately. Let me take the first—that the Land League was the source and cause of outrage generally from its very inception. We have an answer to that accusation, and it will divide itself into four points: First, if the accusation is true, the Land League created agrarian outrage. But where is the child, who has read Irish history, who does not know that it is as old as the hills, or, to speak more accurately, as the land system, which is its parent and source? Show me, if you can, the period of Irish history in the past, since the present land system came into use, when agrarian crime in Ireland was not known? At every period of distress in the history of the land war there has been agrarian crime in Ireland, and the first point I make in answer is, that agrarian crime existed in Ireland long before the Land League or its leaders were heard or dreamt of. Now for

my second point. Turn to the past history of Ireland, and what do you find in reference to agrarian outrage? Wherever you find famines—and they are plentiful in the pages of our history—there you will find an enormous increase of agrarian outrage and agrarian disturbance. It is but natural. When famine comes, the opportunity arrives to enforce the monstrous and unjust power of eviction which the landlords possessed—eviction for no other fault on the part of the tenants than that they were unable to pay exorbitant rent, not through any fault of their own, but owing to “the act of God” in the shape of bad seasons. Turn to the years 1833 and 1848, and you will find famine and its invariable result—an enormous increase of agrarian outrage and crime. In the winter of 1879, you are aware a famine fell upon Ireland, one whose severity was recognised in Australia by all creeds and classes, who contributed generously to alleviate the sufferings of the people. But turn to the records of crime in that famine, and what do you find? What never occurred before in the whole history of the nation; a famine of terrible severity visiting three-fourths of the land, and unaccompanied by any increase of outrage and crime. Every other famine resulted in an enormous increase of agrarian outrage and agrarian crime; for the first time in the history of Ireland, the winter of 1879 and the commencement of 1880 witnessed a famine which was absolutely shorn of its usual increase of crime and outrage. Surely, this is a remarkable fact. Why did not the famine of 1879 produce the same effect as the famines of previous years? I challenge those men, who accuse the Land League of having been from its inception the parent of agrarian outrage and crime, to answer this question. Let me see what the answer is. Was it that the Government took immediate steps to

mitigate the famine, and thus destroy the provocation to lawlessness? We have it on record that the Chief Secretary, the Hon. James Lowther, stated in the House of Commons that all the talk about famine in Ireland was absurd; that in point of fact there was greater destitution in England than in Ireland; and we have the further fact that not one step was taken in Parliament, or by the generosity of English individuals, till the leaders of the Irish people declared that there was a veritable famine there—till they had appealed to the world, and Mr. Parnell had sped across the Atlantic to beg bread for his famishing country. It was, then, no action of the Government in providing relief that deprived the famine of 1879 of the usual increase of crime. What was it then? Was it that the Government took any steps to prevent evictions? Here also we have the records, and pray mark that during the remainder of my speech I say nothing on my own authority; for every statement that I make I quote my authority, chapter and verse. In the beginning of 1880, when the famine was raging in Ireland, the Government introduced a Bill called the Compensation for Disturbance Bill. The effect of that Bill, roughly speaking, would have been this, that in any part of the country which was scheduled as a distressed part, landlords for a limited time should not be allowed, without payment of a fine, to evict any tenant from his home if he could prove to a court of law that the reason he was unable to pay his rent was the famine. That Bill passed the House of Commons, and it went up to the House of Lords where it was defeated, and the Government never stirred hand or foot, never uttered one word of protest, but let the Bill go by the board, and let the people meet the future as best they could. Consequently, it was not legislation on the part of the Government that pre-

vented the famine of 1879 from being marked with crime as other famines—as every other famine had been in the past. Was it the benevolence of the landlords? We happen to know a good deal of landlord benevolence in Ireland in times of famine. We happen to know that in the year 1848, when the people were dying on the roadsides in Ireland of famine, the Imperial Parliament was actually obliged to pass into law a Bill—what for? To make it illegal for landlords to evict tenants on Christmas Day and Good Friday. And in the winter of 1879 and the commencement of 1880, the landlords of Ireland utilised the famine, as they had utilised past famines, as a means to enable them to clear their estates of obnoxious tenants. Then, it was not the benevolence of the landlords any more than it was the action of the Government, in starting relief funds, or passing Acts of Parliament, that prevented the famine of 1879 from resulting the same as every other famine that had preceded it in the history of Ireland in the increase of outrage? What was it then? Well, I will tell you.

In 1879 the Land League sprung into existence. The first duty which the Land League had to perform was the duty of saving the lives of the people whose lives had been neglected by the Government when the Disturbance Bill was rejected. The Land League had to appeal to the whole world for charity, and I may say incidentally that I hope in my heart and soul that the day will never come again when Ireland will be obliged to appear as a beggar at the door of every nation in the world for charity. The leaders of the Land League set relief funds in motion all over the world, and they collected a vast sum of money, but they also did what was very much more important than that; they undertook the work of putting a stop to eviction in Ireland. Evictions in Ireland have always

been the forerunner of crime. The Land League undertook to check evictions—that is, they undertook to do what the Government tried to do in the Disturbance Bill, but which they had failed to do. The Land League perhaps took rough and ready methods; but, the lives of the people were at stake, and it would not do to wait for another session of Parliament, and for another Bill. They called upon the people to combine, and they promised them that if they did they would put down eviction. They preached to them the doctrine that no tenant in Ireland should be found base enough to take a farm from which another tenant had been evicted unjustly. That doctrine was carried out by the people, who then united as they never united in their previous history. Before two months had elapsed, eviction was checked in Ireland, and in checking eviction the Land League effectually checked the tide of outrage and crime. Now, gentlemen, let me not be misunderstood. I do not say that during this famine there were no agrarian outrages. I do not claim for my colleagues the performance of a miracle, but I claim this—that the famine which, judged by the past history of famines in Ireland, ought to have been marked by an enormous increase of crime, witnessed a state of the country in which crime was kept down absolutely lower than what I might call its normal condition. Now, let me verify these facts. I find from statistics taken from returns presented to the House of Commons, that there were

In 1837	...	172 homicides and murders.
1845	...	137 " "
1846	...	176 " "
1848	...	171 " "
1849	...	203 " "
1850	...	113 " "
1851	...	118 " "

In 1852	...	69	homicides and murders.
1853	...	73	„ „
1854	...	53	„ „
1855	...	55	„ „
1856	...	50	„ „
1857	...	52	„ „
1858	...	36	„ „
1859	...	45	„ „

And in the year 1879-80, that is, taking the time covered by the famine, there were in all Ireland exactly *eight murders of all kinds*, and, five of them only were alleged to be agrarian. By way of comparison, and not of invidious comparison necessarily, I may state that in England, in the same year in which there were in Ireland eight murders of all kinds, there were 61 persons tried for murder, 40 for attempted murder, and 328 for stabbing, shooting, and manslaughter. I find, by referring to the records, that the whole teaching and tendency of the Land League were in the direction of the repression of crime. Of course, I might spend a whole night in quoting from the speeches delivered by various members of the Land League, and were I egotistical enough I might quote speeches of my own, because it is a fact which can be verified by any man who takes the trouble to refer to our speeches reported in *Hansard*, and to be found in the libraries of this city, that all through the Land League agitations myself and others never spoke from our places in the House of Commons without addressing to the Irish people earnest words of warning—words of entreaty that they would abstain from ruining their cause and blasting the reputation of their ancient nation, by having recourse to violence and crime. The same thing occurred in Ireland. I suppose I have spoken on hundreds of Land League platforms, and on the hill-sides in Ireland, and I never spoke at a meeting in

Ireland where I did not hear the most responsible men present denouncing outrage in the most uncompromising way. But these are only statements of my own, and, consequently, may have little weight with outsiders, and I propose to read two or three quotations from the leaders of the Land League, and I choose these particular ones because the first is from a speech made at the very first Land League meeting after the opening of the campaign in Ireland; the second is from a speech made about the middle of the campaign, and the third contains absolutely the last public words spoken by any man at the last public Land League meeting in Ireland before its suppression. I find that at Balla, in the County Mayo, in December, 1879, Mr. Parnell used the following words:—

“I congratulate you upon your attitude to-day—calm, self-reliant, determined, but within the law. In this way we shall teach our rulers that although they may violate the Constitution, although they may rush into illegal acts, we are not going to be induced to follow them. . . . I would exhort you with all the little power of force I possess to maintain the attitude that you have maintained up to the present, and not to allow any provocation to draw you away from your duty. Even if your leaders are torn from you, let them go; others will take their places. *Let us remain within the law, and within the Constitution, and let us stand, although we have to stand on the last plank of the Constitution—let us stand until that plank is torn from under our feet.*”

I find that at Kilburn, in the County of Cork, on 17th January, 1881, Mr. Michael Davitt said:—

“Despite the efforts that are being made to drive you from a stern, passive attitude into loose and violent action, adhere to the programme of the League, and repel every incentive to outrage and every inducement to give your enemies an opportunity of wiping out this movement in the blood of Irishmen. . . . But glorious, indeed, will be our victory, and high in the estimation of mankind will our grand old fatherland stand, if we can

so curb our passions and control our acts in this struggle for free land as to march to success through provocation and danger without resorting to the wild justice of revenge, or being guilty of anything which could sully the character of a brave and Christian people."

At the last Land League meeting held before the suppression of the Land League, the chairman, the Rev. James Cantwell, Administrator to the Archbishop of Cashel, in dissolving the Central League on the 19th October, 1881, used these words :—

"I appeal and exhort each one of you in conclusion, that you yourselves, and, so far as your influence goes over others, *will abstain from using violence of any sort in the country. Our position is passive resistance. We are an unarmed people, and every man of sense who loves his country, who wishes to do nothing to bring disgrace and injury upon it, will do all he can to prevent violent action.*"

These are samples of what were the invariable teachings of the Land League leaders. That their object was successful is proved by the fact that the winter of 1879-80, though Ireland was suffering terrible provocation, was stained by less crime than any winter for fifty years previously. Now let me keep the thread of my argument. I am proving that the Land League was not responsible for crime in Ireland generally from its inception; and first I showed you that agrarian outrage was of much older origin; secondly, that the winter, which from the history of past famines ought to have been marked by crime, was less marked by it than any for the fifty years previously, and that that was directly traceable to the Land League having stopped evictions, and to the invariable teachings of its leaders. Let me get on. There came a time when agrarian outrage and crime increased, although there was less provocation, because the famine had passed away. What was that time, and what was the reason of the increase of

crime? The time when outrages began to increase was the time when Mr. Forster's Coercion Act was carried into law. The winter of 1879 saw Ireland almost for the first time for half a century without a Coercion Act and an Arms Act, and yet this winter was free from serious crime. Towards the beginning of 1881 crimes began to increase, though the famine had passed away. Mr. Forster's ill-fated Coercion Act had been passed into law. It had been presented to Parliament by him upon the plea that it was absolutely necessary to ensure tranquillity to the country, and he sought to prove that the country was not tranquil by the production of a return of outrages which showed a very large total. He could not increase the number of murders—five agrarian ones—but he said there was a large number of minor outrages, and we who lived in Ireland were somewhat staggered to find that outrages were committed all around us without our knowledge. In my own peaceful County of Wexford there had been fifty. Knowing the people, and having lived all this time amongst them, I took the trouble to inquire, and found that out of the fifty "outrages" forty were threatening letters. Now, I do not want to palliate threatening letters. I have received some threatening letters myself since I came to Australia, but if I received a million I would not think of calling them a million outrages perpetrated by the people of Australia. We find that a most ingenious method of piling up the agony had been invented. Mr. A. M. Sullivan tells us how a certain young man had a grudge against another young man, the son of a widow, and that he broke into the widow's house and broke her son's head. Breaking into the house was made one outrage, striking the son was another, threatening to do it again was a third, and the upsetting of the widow's pail of milk was a fourth. In this way the

number of outrages was piled up, but it was useless for us to expose this as we did. Unfortunately, in a moment of weakness, which no one regrets more to-day than he, Mr. Gladstone yielded to Mr. Forster, and passed the Coercion Act. The direct outcome was real serious crime. Sir John Pope Hennessy, late Governor of Hong Kong, and present Governor of Mauritius, said, speaking before the Social Science Congress in London, a few months since:—

“He could hardly conclude the opening address of that section without saying a word on that which had recently occupied public attention—the repression of crime in Ireland. He had just come from Ireland, *where he had seen the clearest evidence that in endeavouring to repress crime, crime had been increased.* Here, again, it was the old story; the history of penal laws was the history of centuries of *State-created crime.* Last year hundreds of men ‘suspected’ by the Executive were arrested; most of them were politicians; *some of them were actually the persons of greatest influence in certain districts in repressing outrages.* *As the arrests increased in numbers, the number of outrages increased also.* Whether it be ten thousand miles away, or nearer to the heart of the Empire, one general principle seemed to hold good—that the machinery for the repression of crime was cheaper and more effective where prudent government had secured, on the side of the law, the sympathy and support of the people.”

Do not let it be said the Government had not ample warning of the result of this course of action. We warned them in the House of Commons by the past history of coercive legislation in Ireland. We challenged them to show that any single one of the fifty-one Coercion Acts passed since the union had been effective in repressing crime, and we told them that they ought to have known from the history of every land in the world, where similar legislation had been tried, that the suppression of open agitation would have the effect of driving the people into secret organisations. Unfortunately, our warning was neglected. Let me read the warning given by the Rev.

Mortimer O'Connor, P.P., of Ballybunion, Co. Kerry, who spoke at a meeting of the Land League shortly before its suppression :—

“I established a branch of the Land League in my parish and became its president. Every householder in the parish—farmer, labourer, and tradesman—joined it, *with the result that the most perfect tranquillity prevails, and serious crime is altogether unknown. The restraining influence of the League is clearly visible.* The same is the tone of the surrounding parishes. It also applies in a greater or less extent to all Munster. Should the Government suppress this organisation, which walks openly in the light of day, and hides nothing, the population will be brought face to face with the armed forces of the realm. *Without restraining or controlling influences in their struggle for existence, our suffering fellow-countrymen will be driven into a course which reason and religion alike condemn.*”

Mr. A. M. Sullivan, whose words I am glad to say are quoted and approved of by the journals of this land, and who is, notwithstanding, one of the leaders of the present movement, has thus summed up the result of Mr. Forster's regime in Ireland :—

“He (Mr. Forster) found Ireland alarmed and disturbed. He left it a volcano of human passions on one side, a Bastille of Government vengeance and caprice on the other. The ‘village ruffians’ and ‘midnight marauders’ went apparently untouched—nay, multiplied in numbers and increased in insolence of crime; while mayors, magistrates, members of Parliament, public representatives of every degree were seized and flung into gaol on mere suspicion, without accusation, evidence, investigation, or proof. . . . The inevitable result appeared. *The secret societies became masters of the situation. Crime grew rampant.*”

Unfortunately, it is true that crime did grow rampant. From the very commencement of the operation of the Coercion Act crime began to increase, but the catalogue reached an alarming and horrible total when the Coercion Act was vigorously put in force; when the leaders were arrested, the Land League and its branches suppressed, the

Press of the country gagged, and public meetings declared illegal. Let me read this miserable record of State-created crime:—

“In the first quarter of 1881, when the Coercion Act just came into full operation, there were in Connaught and Munster 568 outrages of all kinds; in the second quarter there were 769; in the third there were 735; and in the fourth quarter, when the League was suppressed and the leaders imprisoned on suspicion, there was the enormous total of 1,127.

“From the commencement of the Land League movement up to the day of its suppression in October, 1881, there were only five agrarian murders in all Ireland; within the six months after the suppression of the League and the destruction of the influence of its leaders by arbitrary imprisonment, there were, in the three counties of Kerry, Limerick, and Clare alone, eight agrarian murders.”

What does this prove? Any intelligent or honest man must say it proved on the face of these facts that this enormous increase of crime, when there was less provocation than in 1879, was directly traceable to the action of the Government and Mr. Forster. When the Coercion Act came into force, the power of the Land League to suppress eviction was curtailed. When the Coercion Act was put vigorously in force; when our mouths were gagged, and we were menaced; when public meetings were declared to be illegal, and the Press confiscated, then our power to check evictions was gone, and evictions multiplied. They multiplied with horrible rapidity, and wherever they appeared, there came in their train agrarian outrage and agrarian crime. Picture to yourselves for a moment the position of the leaders of the Irish people at that time—some of them manacled in their prisons, untried and unaccused of any crime; others of them in exile, their organisations shattered, their organs of public opinion silenced, public meetings declared to be illegal. Picture to yourselves the position of Mr. Parnell in his prison cell; picture his

position, looking out, powerless and helpless, at the increase of crime throughout the land; picture his feelings when he saw from his prison cell the passions that he had restrained breaking loose; when he saw that by the mad and guilty action of the people deprived of their leaders, without hope and without counsel, they were destroying bit, by bit, the work which he had built up by three years of unparalleled labours and sacrifices, and picture, if you can, his feelings when, released from prison, he found himself taunted with being the source and cause of the crime which occurred when he was manacled and silenced, and his organisation shattered. There came a time when these crimes began to diminish just as suddenly, and apparently with as little reason as they had commenced to increase. From a certain day and date agrarian crime in Ireland began to diminish. What was that day and date? Every one knows that it was the day and date when Mr. Forster left the Government, a discredited politician, when his policy was at last discarded by the man whose reputation will not be the greater because he ever allowed himself to be duped by his Irish Chief Secretary—the time when the leaders of the people were released without a word, when the public Press of the country once again became free, when public meetings ceased to be illegal, and when we were once again free to organise an open agitation for our rights. I am not stating on my own authority that agrarian crimes then diminished. We have it on the very best authority. We have it on the authority of Lord Spencer, the Viceroy of Ireland, and we have it on the authority of the Judges of Assize in Ireland, that the number of offences was less than at the corresponding period during the last three years. At Longford there was only one indictment. The Leitrim Assizes were finished in a few hours. At Clare the cases

were neither numerous nor serious. Lord Justice Fitzgibbon, in his charge to the Grand Jury, commented with much satisfaction "on the diminution of crime," and so on from all parts of Ireland. There seems to be an idea in this country that Ireland to-day is in a state of disturbance and lawlessness. I can understand the idea in the public mind, which is excited by the discovery of the perpetrators of the horrible assassination in Phoenix Park more than a year ago. But these things did take place more than a year ago. Ireland to-day, notwithstanding a new Coercion Act, notwithstanding a partial famine, is practically in a state of peace and tranquility. To sum up my answer to the first accusation, that the Land League was the cause and source of crime generally from its inception, there are these four points:—Firstly, agrarian crime existed long before the Land League; secondly, the famine of 1870-80 was saved from crime by the Land League; thirdly, crime began to increase as soon as the Coercion Act of Mr. Forster was passed, and it multiplied into terrible proportions as soon as the Land League was suppressed; and, fourthly, crime diminished as soon as Mr. Forster's policy was disregarded, and open agitation was once more declared to be legal.

Now I come to the second accusation, which is that what is called Mr. Forster's terrible indictment of Mr. Parnell remained unanswered. What was that terrible indictment by Mr. Forster? I will not weary you by any comments of my own, but I may be permitted to say that I have heard every word of that indictment from Mr. Forster's lips at least twelve times in the last three years. There is not one word new in this indictment, and it has only caught the public eye and ear now because the public mind is excited by recent discoveries in Ireland. To begin with, Mr. Forster charges Mr. Parnell with "conniving at

murder." Any schoolboy knows to connive at murder is a crime in the sight of the law. Who is the man that accuses Mr. Parnell of conniving at murder? Does he represent the Government of the country whose duty it would be to charge Mr. Parnell with such a crime? No. Does he represent the law officers of the Crown, whose duty it would be to prosecute Mr. Parnell? No; the Government of the country have made no such charge, and Mr. Gladstone, the head of the Government, has never breathed one syllable in his life to hint even at a suspicion that Mr. Parnell was guilty of such a crime. No, the man who makes this charge is a discredited and disgraced politician. He is the man who owes his fall from power directly to the opponent whom he accuses—a man who never again, were he to live the age of one hundred, can hope or expect to take his seat as a member of any English Government; a man who has been false to Ireland—which, being unable to govern, he calumniated—and false to his own colleagues, whose most intimate secrets he betrayed as soon as they discarded him. Who is the man? Why, he raised his hand to rebuke Mr. Parnell, and accuse him of conniving at murder; look upon his hand, that hand is red with blood. I do not speak these words lightly. His hand is red with the blood of Ellen McDonagh, aged eighteen years, stabbed to death by the bayonets of emissaries. His hand is red with the blood of the five children, all of them under the age of ten years, shot down with buck-shot in the streets of Ballina. His hand is red with the blood of the men slaughtered during his term of office in Ballina and Ballyragget, and other places in Ireland. Allow me to read a portion of a speech in answer to this man, delivered by Mr. Justin McCarthy, in the House of Commons :—

“Mr. Justin M'Carthy, M.P., made a striking point, and showed that in 1864 Mr. Forster had been accused both in the House and in the newspapers of conniving at assassination. Mazzini had written a letter entitled ‘The Story of the Dagger,’ in which the patriot said, ‘Blessed be the knife, blessed be the dagger;’ and talked of these instruments as weapons of ‘irregular warfare.’ This letter was read in the House, whereupon the member for Bradford rose and said, ‘Mazzini, whatever his faults, is a man of high character, and I shall not be ashamed of being his friend.’”

So much with reference to the charge of conniving at murders, proceeding from such a man. Mr. Forster, in his indictment, to use the journalistic phrase, goes on to accuse Mr. Parnell with reference to certain passages which appeared in the *Irish World*. First of all, at the commencement of the Land League movement the Government *stopped the entry into Ireland of that paper*. They would not allow it to circulate, they suppressed its copies in the post office and destroyed them. But Mr. Parnell and myself were supposed, not only to have the time to read every line, but to be able to defeat the Government and to obtain regularly copies of a paper which was denied circulation in the country by Mr. Forster. More than that, at the time some of these quotations appeared, Mr. Parnell was in Kilmainham Prison; so that, first of all, there was this difficulty in his way in following this paper, that it was not allowed to enter the shores of Ireland, and even if it were it would not be allowed to penetrate Mr. Parnell's prison cell; but still we are told we are responsible for every word that appeared in that paper, because we accepted money sent to it. I notice that the *Argus* has started a fund in aid of a distressed Irish landlord, and I notice that in the last ten days the magnificent sum of £6 has been collected. I wish my words could reach that distressed landlord; I would say to him, beware how you

receive this money. If you are an honest man, before you receive it you are bound to come to Melbourne to obtain files of the *Argus* and to read these files, for the last two years, through and through, and if you find any syllable in the *Argus* which you disapprove of, you must not accept the contributions. Otherwise, according to the logic of our opponents, this distressed landlord, to whom I wish every benefit, if he accepts this money, thereby makes himself responsible for every syllable that was ever written in the *Argus* for the last two years. Now, I am afraid I must detain you still longer. I come to the third accusation—namely, that the Land League was responsible, by sympathy and by connection with the Phoenix Park murders. On this matter it is useless for me to express my own opinions. I have spoken mine in many places in Australia, and at one of the largest meetings which I have ever addressed, held in the Freetrade Hall, Manchester, the next day after the assassination—the Sunday after the Saturday upon which they were perpetrated—when a resolution was passed expressing the national horror and indignation at the occurrence. But I wish to answer the charge that the Land League was responsible for those crimes. First, in sympathy. The day after the murders this manifesto was issued to the people of Ireland:—

“To the People of Ireland.—On the eve of what seemed a bright future for our country that evil destiny which has apparently pursued us for centuries has struck at our hopes another blow which cannot be exaggerated in its disastrous consequences. In this hour of sorrowful gloom we venture to give expression to our profoundest sympathy with the people of Ireland in the calamity that has befallen our cause through this horrible deed, and with those who determined at the last hour that the policy of conciliation should supplant that of terrorism and natural distrust. We earnestly hope that the attitude and action of the Irish people will show to the world that an assassination such as has startled us almost to the abandonment of hope of our country’s

future is deeply and religiously abhorrent to their every feeling and instinct. We appeal to you to show by every manner of expression that, amidst the universal feeling of horror which the assassination has excited, no people feel so deep a detestation of its atrocity, or so deep a sympathy with those whose hearts must be scared by it, as the nation upon whose prosperity and reviving hopes it may entail consequences more ruinous than those that have fallen to the lot of unhappy Ireland during the present generation. We feel that no act that has ever been perpetrated in our country, during the exciting struggles of the past fifty years, has so stained the name of hospitable Ireland as this cowardly and unprovoked assassination of a friendly stranger, and that, until the murders of Lord Cavendish and Mr. Burke are brought to justice, that stain will sully our country's name.

(Signed)

“CHAS. S. PARNELL,

“JOHN DILLON,

“MICHAEL DAVITT.”

I find that the Land League in America issued a similar manifesto. It said this:—

“To the Land League of America.—The execrable and cowardly assassination of Lord Frederick Cavendish, the newly-appointed Chief Secretary for Ireland, and Under-Secretary Burke, has horrified the world, and is especially painful and abhorrent to every true friend of Ireland. We denounce the awful crime, and exhort our brethren in Ireland to use every effort to bring its perpetrators to justice, and show their detestation of the fiendish act, which only an arch enemy of our race or some irresponsible idiot could have conceived or executed.—JAMES MOONEY, President of the Irish National Land League of America.”

On this question of sympathy with the Phoenix Park murders, surely our most bitter opponents will acknowledge that Sir William Harcourt, the Home Secretary, is an impartial witness, and yet he used these words in my own hearing, five days after the murders, in the House of Commons:—

“No man is unjust enough to doubt the sincerity of the indignation which the Irish people have expressed at the crime which has sullied their soil. . . . That the heart of the mass of the Irish

people is sound, the voice that comes to us now from every province of that land amply testifies. Though the body of Ireland is sound, there is a fearful plague spot upon it, and I firmly believe that the Irish, no less than the English nation, desire that the plague spot should be removed. There is a cancerous sore in Ireland. It is a sore *which springs from the baneful existence of secret societies.*"

Sir William Harcourt, it will be observed, does not say that the cancerous sore in Ireland sprang from the baneful existence of open agitation or the Land League, but of *secret societies*. I find that the brother of one of the murdered gentlemen, Dr. Burke, of Lafayette, America, spoke thus immediately after the deed :—

"I know that his death will be speedily avenged. I know that no Land League in Ireland, and no Land League here, had a hand in this cowardly deed. Ireland and England are on the verge of a true reconciliation, and no true patriot, no true Irishman, ever committed the fearful and dastardly deed."

And Mr. Davitt, who was interviewed in London immediately after the crime, said :—

"Had I been permitted to continue my crusade against outrage—to have levelled all the influence of the Land League against the commission of murder and the mutilation of cattle, I could have prevented numbers of crimes that now stain the name of Ireland and have averted the horrible deed of Saturday last."

And to conclude on this point, I will read from an interview which recently took place between Mr. Parnell and an eminent journalist in Paris. Mr. Parnell speaks thus :—

"M. Cornely.—But what about agrarian crimes?"

"Mr. Parnell.—We condemn them. The English try to put the responsibility for them on us, as certain Republicans in France try to make the Monarchists responsible for the acts of the revolutionists, and especially for the late manifestations. We are opposed to violence. Our speeches, our writings, are there to prove it. Violence leads to no good, but rather plays the game of the landlord party—"

“M. Cornely.—As in the case of the assassination of Lord Frederick Cavendish?

“Mr. Parnell.—The knife that killed Lord Frederick Cavendish came near killing with the same blow the Land League. We were at that time in a splendid position. My friends and myself, as you know, had been put in prison. Then disorders broke out in Ireland. The Government found itself unable to repress the outrages, and came to us to ask us to intervene. We were liberated. We said to the Government, ‘You must take certain measures. It is necessary that the Land Act should be honestly administered, and that the tribunals charged with applying it should not be permitted to defeat the intentions of Parliament.’ We were in some sort the arbitrators of the situation when, four days after our liberation, Lord Cavendish was assassinated. By that act nearly all the ground we had gained was lost. The English Press never ceased its efforts to make us responsible for that crime. In truth, we should have been mad to have even thought of it, because if men had been paid to discredit us they could not have found a more abominable or a more effective means to do so.”

In the face of these statements, where is the man who will tell me that the leaders of the Irish people to-day had any sympathy with the commission of that horrible deed? The men who make that accusation, unless they be political fools, do not believe in it. Shortly after the commencement of the Land League movement Mr. Davitt appeared in the Round Room of the Rotunda, Dublin, to deliver a lecture in aid of the Land League, and the country was horrified by reading the next day that the meeting was broken into by a body of men, who extinguished the lights and dispersed the assemblage, and that these men called themselves “Nationalists.” It came out a few days after that the person who led this mob was James Carey. I have experienced some of the sympathy of Mr. Carey and his friends. I attended a Land League meeting in Blackburn, Lancashire, and in the middle of the meeting about a hundred men seized the chairs, manufactured shillelaghs

out of them, drove us off the platform, and broke up the meeting effectually; and I found that these were sympathisers with the Dublin rowdies, who never from the beginning disguised their open hostility to us and our movement. It is a fact of which I have personal knowledge that within a week after the Land League manifesto was issued the men who signed it received private information—they knew not from what source—that if they did not withdraw it they would be assassinated; and I know that many of us besides these three men, were obliged to go about armed, because we knew we had excited the enmity of men who would hesitate at no villainy.

Now, was there any connection between the Land League and these assassinations? It was stated that James Carey was a Land Leaguer. I do not know the value of the oath of such a man, but there is his evidence, and in it he stated that he was never a member of any branch of the Land League. *Not one of the men convicted was ever a member of the Land League.* On the contrary, we had very good reason to know they were amongst its most bitter opponents. They hoped to work by desperate means; the Land League was a stumbling block in their way, and they rejoiced when Mr. Forster suppressed it. It is said that money was supplied by the Land League to the Assassination Committee. Upon what evidence? The evidence of Carey. Did he swear it? Nothing of the kind. He said *he did not know where it came from*, and being pressed, he said, "Some of us thought the money came from America, some from the Land League." This is the evidence upon which the Land League is to be convicted of supplying the funds. I am told that a certain amount subscribed to the Land League never was accounted for. When the statement was first made, the sum unaccounted for was stated to be

£98,000. I notice it has grown to £155,000, and I would like to draw attention to the fact that this story originated in the brain of poor Lady Florence Dixie. Now, what is my answer to that? Here is my answer, the existence of which was well known to the Press of this colony, but which was deliberately suppressed. I ask, are they going to report my answer to-night. Here is the balance-sheet of the Land League, dealing with all moneys received from the commencement of the movement down to October of last year, that is to six months after these murders were committed. It may take a few minutes, but I trust to your patience to allow me to read it:—

From Commencement of Movement to October.

Dr.							
Relief Fund	...	...	...	...	£59,178	14	3
Land League Fund to 3rd Feb., 1881	...	...	...	...	30,825	0	5
Defence Fund per Land League	...	...	...	...	6,563	8	7
Do <i>Freeman's Journal</i>	...	...	...	...	14,514	0	0
Land League Funds from 3rd Feb., 1881	...	...	...	...	129,907	0	0
Amount Coupons on Investments, 65,196 francs at 25·25	...	...	...	...	2,582	0	0
Profits realised on sale of 91,000 dols. U.S. 4 per cent bonds	...	...	...	...	1,250	0	0
					£244,820	3	3
Cr.							
Relief of Distress in 1879-80	...	...	...	...	£50,000	0	0
State Trials, Dec., '80, and Jan., 81	...	...	...	...	15,000	0	0
Expenses, support of evicted tenants, providing wooden houses, law costs, sheriff's sales, defence against ejectments, law costs, and general expenses of organisation	...	...	...	...	148,000	0	0
Balance invested in names of Justin M'Carthy, M.P., and C. S. Parnell, M.P.	...	...	...	...	31,820	3	3
					£244,820	3	3

Audited and certified as correct. Rev. Eugene Sheehy, C.C., John Dillon, M.P., Mathew Harris, Patrick Egan, Treasurer. And Mr. Justin M'Carthy, M.P., has also certified to the correctness of these accounts.

That is my answer to the man who says that a single farthing of our funds went towards illegal or criminal purposes. If any of it did so go, it must have been with the guilty knowledge of the auditors who signed the balance-sheet, and with men who would make such an assertion I will have no argument whatever. Such men there are no means of satisfying, unless—I presume they would then be satisfied—I went back and got the books and vouchers of the Land League, and made as auditors, for a new audit, the editors of the *Age* and *Argus*. The men who subscribed to the funds expressed themselves satisfied. To those who did not subscribe to the funds that is my answer, and that only. It has been stated Mr. Egan refused to allow an audit, and went to America the other day to prevent its possibility. The absurdity of this is evident. First, as I have shown you there has been an audit. Second, Mr. Egan going to America could not prevent an audit. He is no longer the treasurer. Last October he resigned, and handed over the books and vouchers to his successor, Mr. Alfred Webb, of Dublin, in whose possession they are to-day.

Now, there was a little piece of incidental evidence which has been seized upon in the country in connection with these trials. Mullet said he had received a cheque while in prison from the Ladies' Land League, and that is held to be a proof that the Land League supplied money to this man, but nobody takes the trouble to inquire the period he was imprisoned, and how he came to be imprisoned. It is a remarkable fact that ought to be noted, *that both Carcy and Mullet were arrested as suspects by Mr. Forster, and strange to say, were unconditionally released by him two months before they say the Invincible Society was instituted.* The *Freeman's Journal*, in Dublin, which is the leading

organ of public opinion, but not the organ of the Land League, started a fund when the Coercion Act came into operation, called the Political Prisoners' Sustentation Fund which was to supply money to all prisoners arrested on suspicion, to enable them to buy food to obviate the necessity for their living on the prison diet, and one of the conditions made by the *Freeman* was that every prisoner should accept the same amount, or that none would be given; and so rigorously was this carried out that Mr. Parnell and other men who were not in the want of money to buy food, actually consented to accept from this fund their £1 per week. The *Freeman's Journal* found that Mr. Forster arrested a thousand men, and consequently their fund grew large and their duty heavy, and they asked the Ladies' Land League to distribute the money, and they consented. Their only duty was to fulfil the conditions of the *Freeman*, and to send a cheque for £1 a week to every man, and amongst others they sent one to Mullet; but, strange to say—and of course this fact has been suppressed—*Mullet, on receipt of the first remittance from the Ladies' Land League, returned it in a letter full of insult, saying that he would have nothing to do with any money that came from any Land League source, and that he would sooner starve in prison, than accept money of a Land League while he was a suspect.* Now, sir, I think all ordinary men will feel that I have sufficiently answered this charge of sympathy and connection with these murderers, because no man of ordinary intelligence believes for one instant in the truth of that charge. Every child knows that if the infernal powers had been called upon to suggest the best means for injuring us and our cause and blackening our reputation, they could not have hit upon a scheme more likely to accomplish their purposes than the perpetration of

these murders, and we would have been madmen or worse if we sympathised or had any connection with a crime which, I care not what circumstances may surround it, must remain, as long as Ireland is a nation, a stain upon her honour. I have now dealt with the accusations that the Land League was responsible by sympathy and connection with the crimes committed, and also that the money subscribed for the Land League was never accounted for. I now come to deal with the last accusation, namely, that we are responsible for, and have sympathy with, the policy of dynamite. I will not enter at length into this matter. I will not humble myself by being coerced into expressing disapproval of a policy which shocks humanity itself, but I call attention to the fact that two whose voices are listened to by Irishmen throughout the world have spoken, and in no uncertain tone on the matter. I will refrain from quoting Mr. A. M. Sullivan's letter to the Irish people of America, because my friends of the Press have been quoting it as an example of what Land Leagues ought to be; but they made a little mistake in the matter, for the man they are quoting is actually one of the leaders of the Land League. He appeals to the few in America who have adopted these means to abandon them, and in scathing words denounced the injustice and the dishonour of such a course of action; and I find that Mr. Michael Davitt, who is supposed to be more extreme than Mr. A. M. Sullivan, used these words in a recent letter:—

“What Irishmen require more than anything else at the present is sound political education, which will temper patriotic enthusiasm with patience, and teach that patient, plodding perseverance, on a slow but winning line of action, is the only sure road to victory in a just and moral cause. Impatience of results, and passion's mastery over judgment and discretion, are our weak points politically, and in the present state of the national movement we are made to see the

disastrous results that follow from a recklessness that is born of political ignorance working upon our Celtic impulse. I prefer, if necessary, twenty years of slow work, which will tell bit by bit for Ireland, to the indulgence of that feeling which is sung about by the poet, when he says, 'Revenge upon a tyrant is sweetest of all'—a feeling like that of most pleasure, which is not only transitory as they are, but which leaves a terrible penalty for Ireland to pay a power that can play at revenge also. All the labours of the past are in danger of being so much wasted energy, because a few political idiots have their ravings about revenge reported in the Press of America and England. *Of all the insane projects ever condemned by common sense as plans certain to defeat a just and moral cause, the dynamite policy is the most idiotic and criminal."*

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I have finished. I have, I think, dealt fairly and candidly, fully and honestly with each one of these five accusations. Let me sum up in two or three words. The first accusation, that the Land League was the source and cause of outrage generally from its very inception, I have disproved by four points. First, that the Land League did not create agrarian crime, which dates back to the origin of the land system. Second, that in the famine of 1879 Ireland was saved from an increase of crime, which ought to have resulted, judging by the history of the past. Third, that crime increased after the Coercion Act was passed, and multiplied after the arrest of the leaders and the suppression of the Land League; and fourth, that outrage only diminished when the leaders were released, and open agitation once again became legal. Then, I have answered the indictment of Mr. Forster, by pointing out its absurdity, and showing you the character of the man who made these accusations. Thirdly, I have shown you that the charge that the Land League was responsible by sympathy and connection with the Phoenix Park murders is a slander that could only be uttered by men who are ignorant of the circumstances of the political situation in

Ireland. Fourthly, I have shown you the falsity of the accusation, on the testimony of the balance-sheet duly audited, that a single farthing of our funds were ever given to illegal or criminal purposes, or that a single farthing remains unaccounted for; and fifthly, I have shown you, by the statements of Michael Davitt and A. M. Sullivan, the way in which we of the present movement in Ireland, regard what Mr. Davitt happily calls the "ravings of political idiots" about dynamite. I believe that the trials and vicissitudes through which Ireland has passed during the last two years will have a beneficial effect upon her fortunes in the future. I believe that the people are rapidly learning the lessons of political moderation and self-restraint as well as of religious toleration, and upon these three things I base my hope for a near future of triumph for our cause. It would be out of place for me to allude to the very absurd comments which have recently been made upon the action of the Holy See in Irish matters; but as his Holiness has, for the first time, become infallible in Melbourne—not, mark you, in spiritual, but in temporal matters—I may be permitted to read a few words from the last encyclical letter to the bishops in Ireland—words of weight, of wisdom, and of affection for the Irish people:—

"The faithful people should be firmly persuaded, as we have already reminded them, that the standard of honesty and utility is one and the same; that the national cause should be kept distinct from the aims, purposes, and deeds of unhallowed associations; that while it is just and lawful for those suffering oppression to seek their rights by lawful means, it is not allowable to make use of the protection which crime affords; and that Divine Providence allots to the virtuous the enjoyment of the fruits of patience and well-doing, but subjects the evil-disposed, after their fruitless labours, to heavy punishments from God and men. So long as these rules are observed, *it is lawful for the Irish to seek relief from their misfortunes: it is*

lawful for them to contend for their rights, for it cannot be thought that what is permitted in every other country is forbidden to Ireland."

His Holiness' words breathe the spirit which animates the leaders of the national movement in Ireland. They breathe that spirit liberally. We say that our cause is a great and a holy one, "the holiest cause that tongue or sword or mortal ever lost or gained." We say that that cause cannot be advanced *et* means that are inconsistent with morality or religion. We repudiate such assistance, "*non tali auxilio nec defensoribus istis*"; not by aid like this, not by such defenders, is the cause of an ancient and honourable nation to be advanced. No end, however great or honourable, can justify the commission of a single crime. There is no man, I believe, in this room who would be more willing than I am to make any earthly sacrifice for the liberties of my native land, but I say deliberately that the liberties of Ireland would not be worth having, purchased by the perpetration of one single act of national dishonour or of national crime.

God of Right, preserve us,
Just as we are strong,
Let no passion swerve us
To one act of wrong.
Let no thought unholy
Come our cause to blight;
Thus we pray Thee lowly—
Hear us! God of Right!

THE AIMS AND OBJECTS OF THE IRISH NATIONAL LEAGUE.

LECTURE DELIVERED IN TOWN HALL, ADELAIDE,

SOUTH AUSTRALIA, 9TH FEBRUARY.

MR. C. C. KINGSTON, M.P., IN THE CHAIR.

IV.

THE cordiality with which you have received me this evening will considerably diminish the difficulty which I must experience in the performance of the important duty which I have undertaken. The true significance of that cordiality I fully appreciate. It is not so much a compliment to myself as an expression of your confidence in the leaders of the National movement in Ireland, in whose name I speak, and an emphatic expression of your loyalty to that cause which we trust we are destined in our day to see triumphant. Of the fortunes of that cause I am here to-night to speak. I am here, as one who has shared in the struggle, to tell you how the fortunes of the day are going, to recount to you what the land movement has accomplished in Ireland, and what it has yet to do, and then to ask you to send across the world assistance in their dire distress to those who are waiting for the result of this movement for permission to live on the land which the Almighty gave to Irishmen to be their homes, and strength and support to the men who are waging a holy but unequal contest. When I

left Ireland, she was in a sad condition. The shadow of a coming famine had once again fallen in the far west and the far north, and we felt our hearts almost stand still with fear as we thought of what might, perhaps, be before our country in the near future. What preparations, you will ask, had the Government made to meet the coming disaster? Absolutely none. The warning cry of famine has been met by the English Parliament—first, with incredulity, and then with the heartless recommendation of emigration. What have the leaders of the National movement done? I will tell you. They have taught the lesson that the scenes of 1847 shall never again be enacted upon Irish soil, and that, come what may, the people shall have food. This brings me to the commencement of my story—a story of what the land movement has done, what it is now doing, and what we believe it is destined to do in the future. A few words first of retrospection. The land question in Ireland may be said really to date from the first incursion of the English. Since then, the land of Ireland has been confiscated many times over. The last confiscation was that carried out by Cromwell. The land of the country was then parcelled out amongst his successful followers, and it is an absolute fact that two-thirds at least of the present owners of land in Ireland owe their titles to their estates to ancestors who earned them as military marauders. By this means, a land system was created in Ireland, so vicious in principle and so brutal in practice, that we look in vain for its parallel in the history of the civilised world. The native Irish had at one blow been struck down from a position which was practically that of proprietor to the position of serfs. Their new lords, who for the most part had gained their estates by rapine and murder, were alien in race and bitterly hostile in religion.

They sought to retain all political and social influence in their hands, and they possessed absolute power over the lives and properties of their unfortunate tenants. As time went on things did not improve. If tenants were rash enough to reclaim or improve their land they were forthwith obliged to pay over the full value of these improvements in the shape of rack-rent to their landlords. The latter, hated and hated by the people, began to live in large numbers abroad, merely sending to Ireland to collect to the last farthing their exorbitant rents. A natural result followed. Poverty, misery, famine, discontent and unsuccessful rebellion followed each other in dismal sequence, generation after generation. Then the process of consolidation of estates began to creep in, and it has gone on so steadily ever since that to-day we have the astounding fact that 740 men own one half of Ireland, and a little over 10,000 men own the whole of it. Every act of the British Parliament was conceived in the interests of the landlords and against the tenants, until in 1870, startled into a momentary consciousness of the enormity of the system which they were supporting by their blood and their treasure, the English Parliament passed a Land Act which professed to protect the improvements of the tenants, but it left the old power of raising rents and of eviction in the hands of the landlords, and proved a useless and hollow mockery. From that date down to the establishment of the Land League, a period of less than ten years, no less than thirty-one Bills were introduced into the House of Commons to amend the land system, and, though all of them were supported by an overwhelming majority of the Irish Members they were all defeated by majorities composed of Englishmen and Scotchmen. The most extreme of these measures was less revolutionary than the Land Act which

in 1881 the League forced the Government to pass, and they were all conceived in a spirit of conciliation towards landlordism. The fact is that at any time for fifty years before the establishment of the Land League the people would have been willing to have made terms with the landlords. All they wanted was permission to live, permission to remain so long as they paid a fair rent in undisputed possession of their poor homes, dearer to them than their palaces to the rich. Their *summum bonum* was fixity of tenure and sufficient food, and they were for ever begging for justice, and holding out the hand of conciliation. All they wanted was bread for their children, and permission to go on enriching the soil with their labour for the benefit of the landlords. But, no! the absolute power of landlordism would not be yielded, and generation after generation the landlords of Ireland rudely repulsed the hand of friendship held out to them by the people. But they did it once too often. Weary of begging and petitioning, with their intelligence awakening to the power which after all rested with themselves, a new spirit sprang to life amongst the people. They had begged for compromise, and compromise had been refused. They had held out the hand of friendship, and that hand had been repulsed time after time. So be it. They could be uncompromising as well as the landlords, and not one moment too soon they adopted from the standards of their enemies the watchword of "No surrender." Henceforth they said their demands should be for their right, and their right was the land. Fixity of tenure meant fixity of landlordism, and they would have none of it. The day of patience was passed, and with one voice the cry went up to heaven that landlordism should go—"The land for the people." The men who first raised that cry were few in number. At their head were Charles

Stewart Parnell and Michael Davitt. Before many weeks had passed they found that their words had sunk deep into the hearts of the people, and that they had the manhood of Ireland at their backs. They speedily assembled the leading men together, and the Land League was formed. From the very commencement, the principles of the Land League were plain and unmistakable; the people—the tillers of the soil—should become the owners of it. But it was not proposed to enquire into the titles of the estates of any landlord; and with a sense of justice—nay, even, I believe, of generosity—which the impartial historian of the future will record with wonder and admiration, the representatives of this people, plundered and oppressed, degraded and done to death by landlordism, proposed that they should only resume possession of the land upon payment of its full honest value to the landlords. They called upon the State to advance the money necessary for this transaction, as had been done in Prussia and other European countries, but meantime they called upon the people to combine, to organise, and refuse to submit any longer to the imposition of rack-rents. You know what followed. The scheme was denounced as revolutionary and communistic; we have lived to see it adopted and recommended by a Committee of the House of Lords. The Government refused to move in the matter, the landlords refused reductions, and the struggle commenced.

One of the regularly recurrent famines fell upon the land in 1879, and Mr. Parnell sped across the Atlantic to beg bread for the people. But before he went he gave the people certain words of advice. He told them to “keep a firm grip of their holdings.” He told them to feed themselves and their children before paying their rent. He told them where their rent was excessive to demand reductions

from the landlords, and he assured them that all the power of England was not sufficient to carry out a policy of universal eviction, and that all that was necessary to ensure success was union. His words rang through the country. It was the preaching of a new gospel—a gospel of life and hope—and the people hearkened to it, and combined as never in their long and chequered history had they combined before. The result soon became apparent. The famine was averted. Before the winter was over the landlords had yielded, and substantial reductions of rent were everywhere the order of the day. But the Government, between two fires, hesitated, and the Government that hesitates is lost. It yielded to the landlords on the one side, and it introduced a degrading, a galling, but a useless Coercion Act. It yielded to the Land League on the other side, and it introduced a weak, a halting, and an impotent Land Act. In both of these policies it was half-hearted, and in both of these policies it failed as it deserved to fail. There is no sane politician now who does not condemn the failure of Forster's Coercion Act, and I think before I sit down I will be able to prove to you the failure of Gladstone's Land Act. That Land Act was regarded by the Land League as a stage of the road upon which they were travelling. It contained the recognitions of great principles for which generations of Irishmen had contended in vain, but it was based upon wrong lines, and it was unmistakably introduced with a view to bolster up a rotten system. But the Land League recognised that it afforded protection to some, at any rate, of the tenants, and that it contained germs which might be developed into useful and even valuable enactments. Hence the League did not reject it. On the other hand, the League would have been false to its principles if it had accepted the Land Act as a settlement of the land question.

What attitude then did it adopt? An attitude of reasonable and statesmanlike character, an attitude legal and constitutional, and now proved to have been most wise. It determined to test the Act. No one knew how the newly-constituted law courts would construe its provisions, but everybody knew that if four or five hundred thousand tenant farmers applied to these courts all at once a hopeless block would be the result. If the Act proved a valuable one its only hope was that, when a few cases in a district had been decided, the other landlords would consent to make agreements out of court on the same basis in the remaining cases, and thus save time and endless legal expenses. This was the meaning of testing the Land Act. Now mark—how did the Government meet this action of the Land League? In a moment of blind folly the members of the Government listened to the counsels of Mr. Forster, and under the outraged name of the “resources of civilisation” they invoked all the worst resources of oppression and of brute force. In that moment the Government tore the mask of constitutionalism from its face, and an absolute reign of terror commenced. The pitch cap and the triangle of a bygone day were not more horrible in their exquisite cruelty and their cold barbarity than were the devices resorted to by Mr. Forster to crush the spirit of the people. The Land League was suppressed first by the arrest of all the leaders, then by a proclamation of the Lord Lieutenant. A thousand men, most of them men of moderate political views, of good social standing, and of stainless character, were seized upon, and thrown on suspicion, untried and unaccused, into the prisons of the country. Martial law in all its horror, though not in its name, was proclaimed throughout the land, and absolute power over the lives and properties of the people was vested in the hands of six

military magistrates, all of them men like Mr. Clifford Lloyd, who had gained their experience by riding roughshod over the coolies of British India. Public meetings throughout the country were suppressed, the national Press of the country was muzzled, the land was flooded with spies and informers, and day after day the people were shocked and maddened by the accounts of the brutalities of the agents of the Government in molesting and beating, aye, and, as I will show you, sometimes in murdering the defenceless people. Then, and not till then, the leaders of the people had recourse to the last weapon in their armoury—a weapon against which they knew all the power of the Government was useless, but a weapon which, in spite of temptation, they had up to that moment refrained from using, because they knew that its use must entail unmerited suffering upon individuals. Ladies and gentlemen, a name conceived in malice has before now ruined a movement. The “No-rent Manifesto” was so named by the enemies of Ireland. “No-rent” was never and is not to-day the policy of the Land League. The document in question was not in its true sense a no-rent manifesto. It was simply this—a call upon the people to suspend the payment of what they acknowledged as a debt for a certain definite time, and, although that call was only partially responded to, it achieved its object, and before six months were over the Government had to acknowledge itself defeated, Mr. Forster was dismissed from office, and the leaders of the people were released. But meantime a winter of unutterable horror had passed over Ireland; innocent blood had been shed, and the friends and enemies of Ireland alike stood aghast at the daily record of outrage and of crime. This is a difficult and painful subject, as you will understand, for me to speak upon, but it is my duty to vindicate my country from the

responsibility of what occurred. From its commencement the Land League set its face against violence and crime of every kind, and if there be a man present who hears me, or if there be a man outside of the hall who may read a report of my words who says otherwise, I defy him to contradict my statement when I say, as I do say conscientiously and solemnly, that up to the moment of the suppression of the Land League in October, 1881, there never was so large a movement which had accomplished so great a work in any nation with less cost of human blood and human suffering. When the Land League was suppressed, and its leaders imprisoned, our responsibility for the peace of Ireland ceased, because our restraining influence was destroyed. We had warned the Government what would happen. We pointed out to the Government that when open agitation is suppressed the history, not only of Ireland but of every nation, goes to prove that the passions of the people will find vent in secret organisation and in crime. We pointed out to the Government that the Land League was an organisation which had a branch in almost every parish of Ireland, and that every branch was presided over by the local clergy, and had the names of most of the richest farmers placed on its roll of members; and we contended with irresistible force that such an organisation meeting in the open light of day must of necessity possess a restraining influence on the side of peace; and we pointed out that the central executive of the Land League had issued a circular drafted by the hand of Michael Davitt, calling upon the people to put down violence and outrage of every kind; and we warned the Government what would happen if that restraining influence were destroyed. Alas! that our words fell on heedless ears. Michael Davitt was sent back to herd with English

criminals in Portland prison. The Land League was suppressed, its leaders imprisoned, and every man of influence and popularity with the people throughout the length and breadth of the land was seized on suspicion and cast into prison. Then the Government found themselves face to face with a maddened and despairing people. We all know how near akin desperation is to crime; how misery and sin go hand in hand. The immortal words in which Shakespeare makes Romeo tempt the poverty and the misery of the apothecary contain the burden of the temptation which was for ever ringing in the ears of the Irish people during that terrible winter:—

“Famine is in thy cheeks,
Need and oppression starveth in thy eyes,
Upon thy back hangs ragged misery,
The world is not thy friend, nor the world’s law;
The world affords no law to make thee rich;
Then be not poor, but break it.”

The Irish people found themselves stripped of all. The evictions which, during the progress of the Land League movement, had been checked, now again began to be carried out ruthlessly all over the land. They were carried out with armed force, with all the pomp and circumstance of war. And the very ladies who, like angels of mercy, came to the side of the evicted families, and provided homes for the homeless and bread for the hungry, were seized as malefactors and flung into prison. Do we always realise what these wholesale evictions mean? Some know what they mean by a bitter experience. But does the outside public realise the meaning of a scene of a wholesale eviction in a country like Ireland? Will you allow me to read to you a few words written on this subject—written by the Most Rev. Dr. Nulty, Bishop of

Meath. The bishop in a pastoral, dated 20th February, 1871, concerning evictions in previous years in the County of Westmeath, writes:—

“In the very first year of our ministry as a missionary priest in this diocese we were an eye-witness of a cruel and inhuman eviction, which even still makes our heart bleed as often as we allow ourselves to think of it. Seven hundred human beings were driven from their homes in one day, and sent adrift on the world to gratify the caprice of one who, before God and man, probably deserved less consideration than the last and least of them. And we remember well that there was not a single shilling of rent due on the estate at the time, except by one man, and the character and acts of that man made it perfectly clear that the agent and himself quite understood each other. The crowbar brigade, employed on the occasion to extinguish the hearths and demolish the homes of honest, industrious men, worked away with a will at their awful calling until evening. At length an incident occurred that varied the monotony of the grim, ghastly ruin which they were spreading all around. They stopped suddenly, and recoiled panic-stricken with terror from two dwellings which they were directed to destroy with the rest. They had just learned that a frightful typhus fever had those houses in its grasp, and had already brought pestilence and death to their inmates. They, therefore, supplicated the agent to spare those houses a little longer: but the agent was inexorable, and insisted that the houses should come down. The ingenuity with which he extricated himself from the difficulties of the situation was characteristic alike of the heartlessness of the man and of the cruel necessities of the work in which he was engaged. He ordered a large winnowing-sheet to be secured over the beds in which the fever victims lay—fortunately they happened to be perfectly delirious at the time—and then directed the houses to be unroofed cautiously and slowly, ‘because,’ he said, ‘he very much disliked the bother and discomfort of a coroner’s inquest.’ I administered the last sacrament of the Church to four of these fever-victims next day; and, save the above-mentioned winnowing-sheets, there was not then a roof nearer to me than the canopy of heaven. The horrid scenes I then witnessed I must remember all my life-long. The wailing of women—the screams, the terror, the consternation of children—the speechless agony of honest, industrious men—wrung tears of grief from all who saw them. I saw the officers and men of a large police force, who were obliged to attend on the occasion, cry like children at beholding the cruel sufferings of the very people whom they would be obliged to butcher had they offered the least

resistance. The heavy rains that usually attend the autumnal equinoxes descended in cold, copious torrents throughout the night, and at once revealed to those houseless sufferers the awful realities of their condition. I visited them next morning, and rode from place to place, administering to them all the comfort and consolation I could. The appearance of men, women, and children as they emerged from the ruins of their former homes—saturated with rain, blackened and besmeared with soot, shivering in every member from cold and misery—presented positively the most appalling spectacle I ever looked at. The landed proprietors in a circle all round—and for many miles in every direction—warned their tenantry, with threats of the direst vengeance, against the humanity of extending to any of them the hospitality of a single night's shelter. Many of these poor people were unable to emigrate with their families; while at home the hand of every man was thus raised against them. They were driven from the land on which Providence had placed them, and in the state of society surrounding them every other walk of life was rigidly closed against them. What was the result? After battling in vain with privation and pestilence, they at last graduated from the workhouse to the tomb; and in little more than three years nearly a fourth of them lay quietly in their graves. The eviction which I have thus described, and of which I was an eye-witness, must not be considered an isolated exceptional event which could occur only in a remote locality, where public opinion could not reach and expose it. The fact is quite the reverse. Every county, barony, poor-law union, and indeed every parish in the diocese, is perfectly familiar with evictions that are oftentimes surrounded by circumstances and distinguished by traits of darker and more disgusting atrocity."

God knows I have no desire to palliate crime, but I say here, with a full sense of my responsibility, that I believe in my heart and conscience that the outrages committed by the people during that terrible winter were not greater in their enormity in the sight of a just God than the outrages committed during that winter in the desecrated names of law, order, and justice by the agents of the Government. Such outrages were of constant occurrence. I will give you, if you will bear with me, one example. Do you remember the story of Ellen M'Donagh? I will tell it. Away in the far west of Ireland an army had assembled to

carry out some evictions among a number of poor people who were absolutely unable to pay the accumulation of arrears of rack-rent which had been the result of a succession of bad harvests. The people were thoroughly hopeless and helpless; they could not, even if they would, resist. But a crowd, composed principally of women and children, collected near the home of one of the tenants, and began to groan the police and the soldiers. This, of course, was an outrage against law and order, and the officer of the police ordered his men to fix bayonets. This not overawing the crowd, a further order was given to charge. Well, at the first sight of that phalanx of steel advancing against them, the crowd broke and ran; but the faster they ran the more fiercely charged the policemen. In the confusion which ensued, a young girl stumbled and fell. She was about eighteen or nineteen years old. She was the daughter of one of the tenants about to be evicted, and her name was Ellen M'Donagh. The police came up to her as she lay face downwards on the ground. A cry of madness broke from the people as they saw these ruffians lift their weapons and stab her fiercely and madly until life was extinct. Then they carried her back to her poor home, where her widowed mother was waiting for the decree which was to make her and her children outcasts upon the world. As they crossed the threshold, a young man, with the fury of a demon in his eye, sprang across it and attacked the police. He was quickly knocked down. He was only the brother of the murdered girl, and he soon had the gyves upon his wrists. Picture that scene to yourselves. The poor cabin half-filled with policemen and soldiers. On one side the widowed mother, wailing over the corpse of her murdered darling; on the other her only son about to be led away as a criminal because he had proved that he had the heart of a man in

his breast. Picture the scene to yourselves, Irish men and women, and tell me can you wonder if that aged mother lifted her hands to heaven and cursed the Government which permitted such enormities. Picture that scene to yourself, you stern moralists, who rail against Irish crime, but know nothing of English provocation. Picture that scene, you fireside philosophers, who would reform humanity on theory, but make no allowance for human nature and human passion, and tell me can you wonder if the people of that whole countryside, their blood turned to flame by the sights they had witnessed, deprived of the advice of their leaders, and stript of every hope, were driven to desperation, to madness, to outrage, and to crime. Let no man misunderstand me. I deplore Irish crime. I detest it. I denounce it! but I say that Irish crime is due to English misgovernment; that England has sown the wind and is reaping the whirlwind; and that upon her head rests the primary responsibility of much of the innocent blood which has been spilt in Ireland. But I have paused too long upon a painful subject. Let me get on. Let me come to the present. You all know how the policy of imprisonment by suspicion broke down; and how Mr. Forster was dismissed from office a discredited politician in England, and a man whose very name is execrated in Ireland. Mr. Parnell and Mr. Davitt and the suspects were released, and at once their influence on the side of law and order became apparent, and agrarian outrages diminished. It is true that since then some instances of crime of a horrible character, which have shocked the whole community, have occurred. It was not to be supposed that the evil passions aroused by the action of the Government could be suppressed in a day. But it is a solemn fact, from the moment of the release of the suspects and the dismissal of Mr. Forster down to the present

moment agrarian crimes in Ireland have steadily and rapidly diminished. When the leaders were released they at once faced the situation. They saw that the great work which the Land League had undertaken to accomplish was but half achieved, and they determined to at once take up that work exactly where it was left when they were arrested. They faced the difficulties of the situation. They found themselves face to face with a new Coercion Act—an Act under which they knew that the Government had the power in their hands to suppress any movement which they disliked, no matter how constitutional or legal. But they knew also that they had a cause which was founded upon justice. They knew that their objects were legal and constitutional, and they determined, at whatever risk to themselves, that they would pursue their course fearlessly and resolutely. The Land League was suppressed. On its ruins they speedily created a new organisation upon the same principles, having the same objects ; and to-day the National League is a power throughout the land. The settlement of the land question which it advocates is the same as that advocated by the Land League. Its leaders are the same ; but its platform has been widened so as to include not only the emancipation of the tenant farmers of Ireland, but of the nation generally, and the restoration of National self-government.

I said at the commencement that the Land Act had been a failure. Let me shortly prove that statement. The Land Act had two main objects. The first was to bring redress within easy reach of every tenant in Ireland who could prove that he was suffering from injustice ; and the second—which depended upon the success of the first—was to conciliate the good will of the Irish people, and to spread peace and prosperity throughout the land.

In neither of these objects has it been successful. The Land Act has been in operation for a year and a half. Of the 600,000 tenant farmers in Ireland only 80,000 have applied to its courts, and of that 80,000 only 37,000 have as yet had their cases decided; and of these decisions 60 per cent. have been appealed against. The total amounts of reduction of rent have only been £70,000; and to achieve that miserable result the tenant farmers have paid £100,000 in costs, the landlords have paid another £100,000 in costs, and it has cost the State £150,000 for the working of the Land Commission; whereas the Land League, with rough and ready measures, had obtained a reduction for the people of considerably over a million. The rents fixed by the land courts lasted for fifteen years, but at the present rate of progress it will take twenty years to decide all the cases of disputed land in Ireland. Meanwhile what are the tenant farmers to do? The new rents date, not from the time of application to the courts, but from the time of the decision of the question of the rent by the final court. So that the most rack-rented tenant may find on applying to the court that he has years to wait, and that meantime he is liable to eviction for non-payment of the old rent. This is a direct inducement for the landlords to appeal from one tribunal to another, and of itself will be sufficient to clog the entire machinery of the Act. But it is a small defect compared with some of the others. The entire class of leaseholders—130,000 of the most rack-rented tenants in Ireland—are entirely excluded from all the benefits under the Act. It is difficult to imagine on what principle of justice or logic this has been done. I will give you a single instance how it works. I know a tenant in Ireland who holds a farm under a lease. Some time ago upon that farm he erected a substantial house,

and there opened the business of a general country store. His business became prosperous and valuable, and when his lease fell in his landlord knew he could not afford to lose the farm, and for the privilege of renewing the lease he made the man pay £500 for the very house he had built himself. If that man held his farm under the ordinary terms from year to year he would be able to bring his landlord into court, and have an allowance made for that £500 which was robbed from him. But under the new Act, because he holds under a lease, the redress is denied him. The one real blot upon the rent fixing clauses of the Land Act is the manner in which the improvements of the tenant are confiscated. As the Land Act left the House of Commons its one valuable clause was the Healy clause, whereby it was enacted that no rent should be charged in respect to any improvements made by the tenant or his predecessor in title. Now the House of Lords, which as you know, has a knack of interfering with Irish matters, amended this clause by adding the words, "Unless the tenant shall have been paid or otherwise compensated for these improvements by the landlord." A perfectly fair and reasonable amendment no doubt you would think, but the chief Land Commission in Dublin, composed, I may add, entirely of landlords, has construed that provision or amendment to mean that compensation for improvements is the same as the enjoyment of improvements by the tenant. It has held that enjoyment or use of his own improvements by the tenant for twenty years is to be taken as compensation for them, and that at the end of that time they became the property of the landlord. So that if a man twenty years ago built a house on his farm and lived in it, at the end of twenty years it ceases to be his and becomes the property of the landlord, upon which increased rent may be

charged. Now, I appeal to every fair-minded man in this assemblage whether it is necessary for me to say a single word more to prove to you that the Land Act under which the property of the tenant can thus be shamelessly confiscated is not little better than a mockery, and must of necessity be a failure. Last year, when Mr. Parnell was lying in Kilmainham Gaol, I introduced into the House of Commons a Bill to amend the Land Act of 1881. One portion of my Bill was accepted by the Government, and the Arrears Act of Mr. Gladstone, which I am happy to say when I left Ireland was working very fairly, was copied word for word from my Bill. The proposals which I then made in the name of the Irish Members in the House of Commons contain to-day the full demands of the Irish National League and of the Irish people for the settlement of the land question. My Bill first dealt with the rent-fixing clauses of the Act of 1881, and it remedied the defects which I have already pointed out, but it did not stop there. We recognised that no regulation of the relations between landlord and tenant could settle the Irish question. The rent-fixing clauses we sought to amend and make workable, but the most that we expected from them is that they will act as a stop-gap, and afford protection to the tenants while we are working out upon different lines the ultimate solution of the problem. In a word, we propose to do for Ireland what has been done for Prussia, and for other countries in Europe with the happiest results. That is, we propose to transfer by State aid the ownership of the soil from the privileged few to the people. Our scheme I will explain in very few words. We propose to call upon the State to advance the whole of the money necessary to enable the tenant to purchase his holding, and we call upon the tenant to repay that sum to the Government by means of

yearly instalments at the rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. for a period of sixty-three years. Now, allow me at once to dispose of the idea that we are asking English taxpayers to permit this money to be advanced out of the general revenue. Nothing of the kind. We only ask for Ireland the benefit of the Imperial credit on which Government can borrow at 3 per cent. For a scheme of this kind to be successful, it must not only be honest in itself but it must hold out inducements to the landlords to sell and to the tenants to buy, for we do not propose to make the scheme compulsory upon anybody. Let us see how our plan would work. Let me take, as an example, the case of a tenant whose fair rent is £75. Taking then twenty years' purchase as a fair value for the land, the State would be called upon to advance to that tenant £1,500 to enable him to purchase his holding, and he would be called upon to pay to the State $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. upon that—£52 10s. a year—for a period of sixty-three years, at the end of which time the land would be his or his children after him. So that, from the tenant's point of view, he would have achieved this :—Instead of paying £75 a year rent for ever, he would be only called upon to pay £52 10s. a year for a term of sixty-three years, after which the land would be his. From the landlord's point of view this scheme is equally attractive. It may safely be said, and those who know anything of the condition of Ireland will bear me out when I state it, that landed property in Ireland is mortgaged to at least two-thirds of its value at this moment. It has been proved that the rent-fixing clauses of the Act will reduce the rentals paid in Ireland at least 25 per cent. all round, and will thereby ruin the majority of the present landholders. Their only hope is in the scheme of purchase such as we propose, whereby they would obtain a fair value for their land in

cash down, and then be able to pay off their liabilities and have something to live upon. Hence it is that the very men who, when we started our scheme three years ago, denounced it as revolutionary and communistic, are now to be found in favour of it; and a committee of the House of Lords composed entirely of landlords—and presided over by that arch Tory Lord Cairns—actually adopted and recommended the scheme which I now propose. The Marquis of Lansdowne, and almost all the prominent Irish landlords, are urging the Government to adopt our scheme, so we have to-day the strange sight of landlords and tenants, the two parties interested, both asking the same settlement. This, and this only, is the demand of the Irish people for the settlement of the land question. I appeal to all impartial men in this land whether that scheme is not a just one, whether its objects are not legal and constitutional ones; and I appeal to all justice-loving men to aid the Irish people in obtaining them. Our scheme affords to the landlords a means of escape from a certain future of ruin, and to the people it affords a complete concession of their demands and an end of a system which has pauperised and depopulated Ireland, and which is stained with the tears and blood of countless thousands of her children. Of course objections to this scheme are urged in England and in the House of Commons. I always like to face objections, and, if I can, to overcome them. There are only two objections to the scheme of any weight. The first objection comes from those who say that in times of distress it may be difficult to collect the yearly payments from the people; that in other words, that the security of the Government would not be ample enough. Now, I might answer that objection by referring to experiences of other countries where a similar scheme has been tried. I might answer it

by pointing out that year after year the tenant farmers of Ireland would be acquiring an interest in their holdings—an interest which they could mortgage or sell, and that every earthly inducement would tend to make them punctual in the payment of these instalments. But I prefer to answer these objections by referring to actual experiences in Ireland itself. As you are, no doubt, well aware, in the Irish Church Disestablishment Act of 1869 the Irish Church Temporalities Commission was charged with the duty of transferring the ownership of the Church land to the occupiers of it. By that scheme 6,000 tenant farmers were changed into proprietors on the same lines as we propose, and although they purchased at what seems to us now ruinously high rates, down to this moment, during the land agitation, and during the period of distress through which Ireland has passed, they have not been, and they are not to-day, one sixpence in arrears with their instalments. That, I contend, is a complete answer to this objection. The second objection comes from those who say that there are tenants in the west of Ireland, and in the north of it who say that they could not live upon the land if they could get it for nothing, so poor is the soil and so dense the population, and they recommend emigration as the only remedy for them.

Now, the over-population of certain districts in Ireland is a fact, but none the less is it a fact that there is room in Ireland for every soul within her shores. Tracts of fair and fertile land can be seen in the centre of Ireland which have been depopulated by landlordism, and allow me to remind you that at this moment there are four millions and upwards of acres of land—of reclaimable waste land—in Ireland. We propose to employ people from the over-populated districts on works of reclamation upon these

lands, and then we propose to settle them as owners of the soil which they have won back from the mountain and the moor. It seems to me that any man who recommends emigration as a panacea for all the ills of Ireland cannot have read aright the history of Ireland since the great famine. Three millions of Irish people have left the shores of Ireland within the last thirty years. Of these 75 per cent. have been under the age of 35 years. What does this mean? It means that the old, the weak, and the decrepit, those least able to assist the industries or increase the wealth of the country, remain, and the able, the strong, those who should be the wealth producers of Ireland, go. As emigration has gone on, so has increased the general poverty and misery of the country. As emigration has gone on, so has increased the amount of acres of land which every year are going out of cultivation and back to waste, and we are determined to use what influence we possess to prevent the young blood of the nation being drained away any longer by hundreds of thousands of her people leaving her shores. In the Ireland of to-day there is an awakened intelligence, a wider education, and a sterner spirit than in the Ireland which many of you left. Conscious of the justice of their cause, the people are willing to endure suffering and to withstand calumny. They know that time is working on their side, that day by day the public opinion of the civilised world is awakening to the justice of their demands, and they know, although there may yet be a weary time before them to wait, that an inevitable day of triumph and of justification is at hand. They may have to wait, but they only have to wait because the system of government under which we live is an anomaly and a scandal. We are mocked with the empty form and not the substance of representative government. Representative government

means government in accordance with the constitutionally-expressed will of the majority of the people—government carried out by a Ministry constitutionally responsible to the people. The government of Ireland is based upon diametrically opposite principles. The government of Ireland is carried out in direct opposition to the constitutionally-expressed will of the majority of the people, and is carried out by a Ministry responsible, not to the people whom they govern, but to the people of another nation. In England all that is necessary to ensure the enactment of reform is that the people of the English nation shall be in favour of it. In Ireland, even where the people of the Irish nation are unanimously in favour of certain reforms, they cannot be carried out without the consent of the people of England, who, to say nothing harder of them, are for the most part ignorant of our wants. What has been the history of eighty-two years of the so-called union with England? A history of ruined prosperity, of embittered passions, of poverty, misery, famine, insurrection, bloodshed, and murder—a history of reforms refused to peaceful agitation, only to be granted afterwards to violence; and, from the days of Catholic Emancipation down, the same lesson taught to the people, to hope nothing from England's sense of justice, but everything from her fears. Such a system of government stands self-condemned before the world, and cannot last. Here, where the paralysing fingers of centralisation have not laid their withering grasp, where a free Parliament legislates for a free colony, it ought not to be necessary for me to argue in favour of Irish legislative independence. By Irish legislative independence I mean, and the National League mean, and the Irish people mean, this and this only—that the will of the majority of the people of Ireland should be as powerful in the government of purely Irish affairs

as the will of the people of South Australia is powerful in the government of South Australian affairs. I know there are men here as there are in England who pretend that they think that by Home Rule we mean a dismemberment of the Empire. The dismemberment of the Empire is a fine phrase. I am not quite sure that I exactly understand what the gentlemen mean who use it in this connection, but I am speaking here as the representative of the National League, of the leaders of the people, and of the people themselves, and I think I have a right to claim that my definition of self-government shall be accepted. What we mean is this—a measure of self-government, similar to that which you possess here, and the recognition of our nationality similar to that which Austria recently made to Hungary. Were I so disposed, I might base Ireland's claim for self-government upon England's failure to govern her, upon the disastrous effects which the Union has entailed upon every Irish industry and every Irish interest. In a word, I might base our claim upon grievances, but, although I know that a claim so based must be powerful in the minds of all impartial men, at the same time I will not be so dishonest as to pretend that either I or the Irish people base our claims for self-government upon grievances alone. We believe that our claim has a firmer basis. Grievances may pass away, but Ireland's nationality will remain. Grievances may pass away, but Ireland's divine right to self-government is imperishable. Do what England may, she cannot make Ireland a part of herself. She cannot make Ireland other than a separate country. The Almighty so willed it when He traced the lines of the universe, and gave to the Ireland that we love a separate existence. He so willed it when He gave to Irish intellects and Irish hearts a distinct and unmistakable individuality. He so willed it

when He reserved for the Ireland of old the glorious mission of being the educator and evangeliser of the world. I know that Englishmen find it difficult to understand the wild, passionate love which we Irishmen have for our nationality. Will they allow me to remind them that our nationality has come down to us sanctified by the blood and sufferings of our forefathers. Seven centuries of undying struggles, seven centuries of sacrifices, of suffering, of defeat, of disaster, of undying faith, living through it all, look down upon us this day and make the sentiment of our nationality the master-passion of our lives. There is no day that the sun rises which does not bring to us the memories of the past, the voices of the dead, binding our hearts to stronger allegiance to the nationality for which the bravest and best of our race have laid down their lives. It may be that there is suffering in store for the present generation of Irish as there was for their sires and their grandsires. If so, let suffering come. There is but one thing impossible for Ireland, and that is the abandonment of her nationality so long as there beats under the vault of Heaven one Irish heart. I fear I have wearied you. The mission which I have brought to the country requires, I believe, but few words of explanation. I have come here to appeal for the renewed sympathy and support of my fellow-countrymen in Australia, but I have not come to appeal to them alone. I desire to appeal to the entire people of these colonies; I desire to be permitted to place before them in their true colours the real demands of the Irish people; I ask their permission to endeavour to prove to them, as I think I am able to do, that the cause of Ireland is founded upon justice; that the objects of the National League are legal and constitutional and patriotic, and that they are deserving of the support of every impartial and justice-loving man, I care

not what his nationality or his creed may be. No doubt you will say that is an arduous task to have been entrusted to so young a politician as myself. Well, I am very deeply impressed with the responsibility of my position here. When I undertook this work I knew that I was about to appeal to a people who had proved before the world their sympathy with the sufferings of Ireland by an unparalleled and never-to-be-forgotten generosity, and I said to myself these are a people who, if once I can convince them that our cause is founded upon justice, will not allow prejudice to interfere with their minds, but will give that cause sympathy and support. I trust that I am not too sanguine when I say that I hope the little I have said to-night will do something to burst those clouds of ignorance and prejudice which unfortunately everywhere I go I find surrounding the Irish question. To my fellow-countrymen in Australia I appeal with unbounded confidence. Ireland's chief hope, and her greatest glory, consists to-day in her exiled sons throughout the world. Englishmen often boast that the sun never sets on the dominions of the Queen. Well, we have as proud a boast, for, wherever the rays of that sun fall all round the circle of the world, there are to be found Irish men and women faithful to the fortunes of their country. "Condemned to death, but fated not to die," the grand old Celtic race has to-day found a home wherever the foot of man has trod, and at this moment Ireland is receiving tokens of sympathy, allegiance, support and affection from her exiled sons in every quarter of the globe. Fellow-countrymen, my last words to you to-night will be words of encouragement and hope. I believe in my heart and conscience that Ireland's night is well-nigh over. True, her plains and her valleys still lie shrouded in darkness, but the watcher on the tower sees a break in the far east, and

a ruddy glow upon the mountain top, and he knows that the God of the day has risen, and that anon he will flood every nook and corner of the land with his broad, glad light, and that darkness and things of darkness shall disappear. When that moment comes—that moment for which our forefathers so wildly and so vainly prayed, and wept, and struggled, there will go up to Heaven a cry that will be echoed over the ocean and wafted by the four winds to the corners of the earth, that will be chorused in America and re-echoed here under the Southern Cross, and the sea-divided Gaels wherever they may be will hear that cry, and they will rejoice, for they will know, their glad hearts will tell them, that the God of justice, who has decreed that those who sow in tears shall reap in joy, has at last rewarded the tears and sufferings of a faithful people, and that Ireland, their Ireland, is free.

IRISH PROTESTANTS AND HOME RULE.

LECTURE DELIVERED IN THE ROTUNDA, DUBLIN,

29TH NOVEMBER, 1886.

THE LORD MAYOR IN THE CHAIR.

V.

IN choosing a subject for my lecture to-night, I have been guided by a consideration which ought, I think, to be present to the mind of everyone who properly appreciates the position in which the National cause is placed at this moment. That cause, which in the time of our own fathers appeared to be a losing one, associated, as it was, with memories of almost unbroken disaster and defeat, has suddenly experienced that turn of fortune which is ever in store for a cause founded upon truth. We have seen the cause of Irish liberty advanced in our day to the very threshold of victory. We have seen our friends multiplying and our enemies disappearing; we have seen the heart of the civilized world touched by the spectacle of Ireland's constancy and devotion, and minds and ears that were long closed by prejudice and ignorance against the demands of Ireland are now open to the voice of reason. Up to the present it has been a blind struggle of might against right. Force, and not reason, has been the guiding principle in the government of our country; but to-day England, if she has not conceded our demand, has, at any rate, laid aside

the sword, and consented to listen to argument. When once, to a cause founded upon right, the test of argument is thus applied, the triumph of justice is assured. The last elections in Great Britain disclosed Wales and Scotland in agreement with Ireland, and disclosed England not so much hostile as perplexed, hesitating, and doubtful. She was willing to listen and to learn, but she knew not whom to trust or whose story to believe. Her doubts and perplexities alone stand between us and the final triumph of our cause to-day. These doubts and perplexities are, in my opinion, for the most part, sincere and honest; and the one great duty of the moment for Irish Nationalists is to explain them away or to satisfy them.

In fulfilment of this duty I have selected my subject for to-night, and instead of speaking simply as a Nationalist to an audience of Nationalists, I prefer to address myself to the task of grappling with one of those difficulties which many Englishmen do honestly see in the way of a concession of Home Rule to Ireland.

The charge made against the mass of the Irish people of religious intolerance, is, perhaps, the most insulting accusation which could be levelled against a nation struggling to be free, and, if proved, would go far, indeed, to justify the refusal of free institutions to a people who themselves had not conceived the fundamental ideas of freedom. Such a charge against any nation at this time of the nineteenth century to ordinary persons would seem a little exaggerated; but coming from the people of England against the people of Ireland, such a charge must seem to anyone who knows the facts, and has read the pages of history, little short of absurd and ridiculous. Still this accusation was freely made against our people during the last elections. The English people were told by statesmen, who well know the

contrary to be the truth, that it would not be safe to give Home Rule to Ireland, because Ireland was made up not of ~~one~~ nation but of two, and that the Protestant Irish nation being in the minority would suffer persecution and injustice at the hands of a National Parliament in Dublin containing a majority of Catholics. Absurd as this accusation is, there is reason to believe that it had considerable weight with many Englishmen, and it undoubtedly constitutes one of the difficulties which still stand in the way of the concession of self-government to Ireland. It consequently becomes our duty to expose its fallacy, to show its inherent impossibility, and to appeal to the pages of history in support of our argument.

I propose shortly to prove—first, that there are no two nations in Ireland to-day, and secondly, that all the history of the past disproves the assertion that Catholic Irishmen ever were guilty of religious persecution, and all the experience of the present shows them to be incapable either of intolerance or bigotry. I assert that there are no two nations in Ireland to-day—that all the people of this land—Catholic, and Protestant, and Presbyterian—of Celtic, or Norman, or Saxon extraction—are all children of one nation bound together not only by common interests, but by common traditions, memories, and history. In order to prove my assertion, it is necessary briefly to glance at the history of Protestant patriotism in Ireland, and to show how the English Protestant colony became in fact and in substance incorporated with the native Irish, as the Normans had been incorporated with them before, and how what was established as an English garrison, in the end became converted into the garrison of the national rights and liberties of Ireland. In tracing this story I will at one and the same time show how much Ireland owes to her Protestant patriots,

and how strong are the bonds which unite into one nation Irishmen of every religious persuasion. At one time it could truly be said that there were two nations in Ireland, if indeed the native Catholic masses could be said to exist at all after the violation of the Treaty of Limerick, and the departure of Sarsfield and the Irish soldiery to France ; and if the narrow, self-seeking, and intolerant Protestant faction which monopolized all power and privilege, deserved to be dignified by the name of a nation. From 1691, for nearly one hundred years, the native Catholic masses as a nation may be said almost to have disappeared. They were penalized and outlawed. They were banished from Parliament and deprived of the franchise ; they could not possess property, or practise their religion, or educate their children. Their leaders were in exile, fighting under the standards of foreign monarchs, and those at home in Ireland beaten to the ground were hopeless and helpless. What went by the name of "the Irish nation" was the colony of English Protestants who had undertaken the government of the country, who had become possessed of the lands of the Catholics, and who were so divided from the masses of the people by religion and sentiment that they seemed to think their only safety lay in forging penal chains for the native Irish. At that time indeed there were two nations in Ireland ; but I think no history in the world affords a parallel to the extraordinary result which speedily followed.

These two nations coalesced, not by the weak persecuted native nation bowing to the stronger English colony, but by the awakening in the hearts of the English colony of a spirit of Irish nationality and patriotism, which speedily fused into one nation struggling for its rights, Catholic and Protestant, English colonist and native Irish. The manner in which this happy consummation was brought about was charac-

teristic of the treatment which Ireland had ever received from the government of England.

The Protestant colony was expected by England to enslave the Irish nation; but having done so, it was expected also to submit to slavery itself. "Your ancestors," said John Philpot Curran to the Irish Parliament a hundred years afterwards—"your ancestors thought themselves the oppressors of their fellow-countrymen, but they were only their jailors; and the justice of Providence would have been frustrated if their own slavery had not been the punishment of their vice and folly." The Protestant colony had succeeded in completely suppressing the native Irish. It had absolutely excluded the Catholics from power. It had made the executive of the country exclusively Protestant; but when it aspired to freedom for itself, it was speedily taught that it was nothing more than the agent of England, and that the only freedom it could claim was the freedom to oppress and trample on the ancient Irish nation. In point of fact, as soon as the colony had succeeded in enslaving the Irish, England set to work to enslave the colony. The colony had deprived the Catholics of a share in Parliament. England thereupon robbed the Parliament of its independence. The colony had condemned the Catholics to poverty, England thereupon restricted the trade and destroyed the prosperity of the colony.

The claim of the English Parliament to control, direct, and bind the Irish legislature was of old origin. Poyning's Law, which enacted that no Bill could be originated in the Irish Parliament until the heads of it had been sanctioned by the English Privy Council, was, it is true, passed so early as 1495. But repeatedly the Irish Parliament had endeavoured with more or less success to free itself from the fetter. In 1640 it asserted its right to legislative indepen-

dence. Later on, the Confederation of Kilkenny asserted the same right in a still more unequivocal manner. In 1689 the so-called Catholic Parliament of James II. repealed Poyning's Act, and again asserted the legislative independence of Ireland. But after the triumph of William III. the Irish legislature definitely sank to the level of a committee of the English Parliament, and the more the colonists suppressed the liberties of the Catholics, the more England suppressed their own privileges and degraded their own Parliament. In 1699 a fatal blow was struck by England at the commercial prosperity of the colony. The woollen trade was practically suppressed. All exports of woollen cloths were prohibited except to England and Wales, and even this exception was delusive, for heavy duties, amounting to a prohibition, prevented Irish cloth being imported into England or Wales. All trade between Ireland and the colonies was prohibited by the Navigation Laws. Mr. Lecky says in his *History of the Eighteenth Century*:—

“Protestants then began to find that they were as little thought of as the Catholics. The suppression of the woollen trade brought ruin upon twelve thousand Protestant families in Dublin, and thirty thousand in the rest of the country. By her commercial laws England deliberately crushed the prosperity of the Protestant colony of Ireland, drove thousands of them into exile, arrested the influx of Protestant population from Great Britain, and inspired the Presbyterians of the north with a bitter hatred of her rule.”

In point of fact a deliberate system was established to put down alike the political pretensions and the commercial prosperity of the Protestants of Ireland, who then found themselves in this extraordinary situation. They had practically conquered Ireland and enslaved the Irish people, and in return they were expected to calmly accept the position of slaves for themselves. Then there was born in the

breasts of those men the first spark of that sentiment of nationality which was destined to win for them and their country commercial freedom and legislative independence, and eventually to weld into one nation Irishmen of all creeds and of all bloods. This spirit at first was very timid, very narrow-minded, and selfish. It never seemed to occur to these men that to constitute a nation, and to assert its independence, the concession of liberty to all Irishmen was essential.

At first their ideas of nationality included only the Protestants of Ireland. We shall see by and by how this idea, fructified and developed, until in the minds of Grattan and his colleagues, the Irish nation for which they had struggled included their countrymen of every creed. The first evidence of this growing spirit of revolt against English oppression was furnished by the publication of the celebrated *Case of Ireland Stated*, which was a book written by Mr. William Molyneux, Member for Dublin University, in which he conclusively proved that England had no legal or equitable right to interfere in the legislation of the Irish Parliament. It was, in truth, as a voice crying in the wilderness. Men were amazed at its audacity, and English statesmen were horrified at what they called its revolutionary doctrines. The book was burned by order of the English Parliament by the hands of the common hangman, but the spirit of which it was an evidence survived, and from that day forward the patriot party amongst the Protestants of Ireland may be said to have existed.

It was at this period of Ireland's history, when the idea of nationality was slowly developing in the minds of the Protestant colony, that there appeared upon the political stage the striking and eccentric figure of Jonathan Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's. Swift was one of the strangest characters

in Irish history—an odd mixture of patriotism and narrow bigotry, of genius and eccentricity. He never made the slightest effort to mitigate the persecution of the Catholics; he never for an instant included them in his idea of Irish Nationality; yet he did as much, probably as any man in history to lift Ireland into the position of a nation; and he not only paved the way for, but he rendered absolutely inevitable, that fusion between the Protestant colony and the native Catholics, which, in the end, won independence for the country. He urged the people to meet the restrictions placed upon their trade by boycotting foreign goods, and advised them to “burn everything English except their coals.” He seized upon the question of supplying Ireland with a new copper coinage, as an opportunity for vindicating the independence of the country, and in the *Drapier Letters* he boldly asserted the ideas which were rapidly maturing in the minds of the Protestants. He asserted the legislative independence of Ireland, and the nullity of those measures which had not received the sanction of the Irish Legislature. He avowed his entire adherence to the doctrine of Molyneux; he asserted that Ireland was rightfully a free nation, which implied a right of self-government, “for government without the consent of the governed was the very definition of slavery.” In vain England sought to insist upon Wood’s halfpence. Swift, in fighting this issue, was fighting the battle of Irish independence. He persevered; he united the people of all creeds at his back, and in the end he carried his point. Speaking of this contest, Mr. Lecky says:—

“This contest deserves to be placed in the foremost ranks in the annals of the Irish race. There is no more momentous epoch in the history of a nation, than that in which the voice of a people has first spoken, and spoken with success. It marks the transition from an

age of semi-barbarism to an age of civilization, from the government of force to the government of opinion. Before this time, rebellion was the natural issue of every patriotic effort in Ireland ; since then, rebellion has been an anachronism and a mistake. The age of Desmond and O'Neill had passed ; the age of Grattan and O'Connell had begun."

Swift now became the idol and leader of the Irish people. He taught them their first lessons in self-reliance. He led them to victory when oppression had well nigh broken their spirit, and when the exile of all their own leaders had robbed them of hope ; he held up before their eyes the possibility—soon afterwards to be in part realised—of a fusion of the two sections into one nation ; and consequently, in spite of his well-known intolerance and bigotry, he became the most universally popular man in Ireland. His ending was singularly tragic. The great controversialist, the energetic patriot, the brilliant wit, sank into his grave in a hopeless state of idiocy.

"Last scene of all,
That ends this strange, eventful history
Is second childishness and mere oblivion."

Swift passed away, but the cause of Irish nationality which he had championed never afterwards passed away from the minds either of the Protestants or the Catholics of Ireland.

Flood then stepped into the position of leader of the patriotic party, and at one step we may pass on to the history of the Volunteers. In 1778 the Irish Parliament sanctioned the enrollment of a volunteer force for the defence of the country. Mr. Lecky thus describes what then occurred. He says :—

"Then arose one of those movements of enthusiasm that occur two or three times in the history of a nation. The cry to arms passed

through the land, and was speedily responded to by all parties and by all creeds. Beginning with the Protestants of the North, the movement soon spread to other parts of the island, and the war of religions and of creeds, that had so long divided the people, vanished as a dream. The inertness produced by centuries of oppression was speedily forgotten, and replaced by the consciousness of recovered strength. From Howth to Connemara, from the Giant's Causeway to Cape Clare, the enthusiasm had passed and the creation of an army had begun."

The Irish Volunteers were at first an exclusively Protestant organization, but so anxious were the Catholics from the first to participate in the movement, that in the City of Limerick, when forbidden to bear arms themselves they subscribed £800 to purchase arms for their Protestant fellow-countrymen. It was a happy omen of the fusion of the two nations which was about to take place. It was now that public spirit in Ireland began at last to be truly National. Henry Grattan saw in the Volunteers a means of uniting Irishmen, and owing largely to his exertions, Catholics were at last admitted into the ranks of the National army. *From that day forward the two nations had ceased to exist.* Shoulder to shoulder, Catholic and Protestant Irishmen united to demand free trade and a free parliament. In the words of Flood :—" A voice from America shouted 'liberty' and every hill and valley of this rejoicing land answered 'liberty!'" In 1780 the Volunteers obtained for this country a first instalment of liberty in the concession of complete free trade—that is the freedom of their trade from all restrictions placed upon it by any authority other than the legislature of Ireland. The next step was the assertion of the independence of the Irish Parliament from interference by England. Day by day the fusion of the two nations was becoming more perfect; day by day the fell spirit of sectarian hate was dying out. The

Volunteers declared at Dungannon, in Convention assembled, that:—

“We hold the right of private judgment in matters of religion to be equally sacred in others as in ourselves, and we conceive the measure of relaxation of the Penal Laws against the Roman Catholics to be fraught with the happiest consequences of the Union and prosperity of the inhabitants of Ireland.”

And Grattan repeatedly voiced the determination of the leaders of the patriotic party to base Irish liberty upon the recognition of the entire people. In one of his speeches he made this remarkable declaration :—

“So long as the Penal Code remains we can never be a great nation. . . . I would not keep two millions of my fellow-countrymen in a state of slavery. I desire not a Protestant settlement, but an Irish nation.”

How Legislative Independence was won in 1782 every one knows, and how the Protestant Parliament, having broken its own fetters, set themselves instantly to the task of admitting Catholics to their full rights will never be forgotten. The work of emancipation was slow, but sure. In 1793 Catholics were admitted to the franchise, the juries, the professions, and the Universities ; and when two years later Lord Fitzwilliam arrived in Ireland, we have that nobleman's own authority for the statement, “that the Protestants of Ireland had generally accepted and approved of a policy of complete and immediate emancipation.”

Unfortunately, English statesmen had at this time determined to force a scheme of legislative union upon the country, and they knew that such a policy would be impossible if once the Catholics were admitted within the constitution. Primate Boulter, more than half a century

before, had said, "When Papist and Protestant unite, good-bye to the English interest in Ireland." English ministers determined that this union should not take place. Accordingly, the policy of emancipation was wrecked, and an intolerant Irish faction was utilized for the purpose of stirring up religious animosities and driving the people into insurrection. The diabolical plan succeeded only too well, and Ireland was robbed of her Parliament.

But neither then nor since has England ever been able to divide Ireland again into two nations. Protestants won the Parliament of '82; Protestants organized the Society of United Irishmen, and filled its ranks both before and after it became a revolutionary body; Protestants gave the franchise to Catholics in 1793; Protestants led the rebel armies in 1798; Protestants gallantly, but vainly, defended Irish constitutional liberty in 1800; and from that day to the present no movement has ever been started, either on behalf of national independence or religious freedom, which Protestant Irishmen have not shared in or led.

It is true that all this time there had been an intolerant anti-Irish and anti-Catholic faction in Ireland. The men who in 1793 opposed the claims of the Catholics, who brought about the recall of Fitzwilliam in 1795, whose bigotry and fanatical oppression drove the people into arms in '98, who posed as the English garrison in 1800, and sold their country's liberty, and who from that day to this hour have ever been the despised tools of English misgovernment in Ireland—these men no one can seriously say constitute a nation. They have never risen above the tactics or the aspirations of a faction. The only nation in Ireland to-day is the one nation of Irishmen, bound together by devotion to the land that bore them, by hatred of oppression and love of liberty, and by the memory of the scenes when their

forefathers, Catholics and Protestants alike, shed their blood in defence of religious toleration and national freedom.

This, then, is our answer to the statement that there are two nations in Ireland to-day. The history of the past and the realities of the present alike protest against it as an absurdity and an affront.

More difficult is it adequately to reply to the second part of the accusation, which is in the nature of a prophecy, that under a Home Rule Parliament the Catholic majority would persecute and oppress their Protestant fellow-countrymen. Grattan once said:—"You cannot argue with a prophet, you can only disbelieve him." In the case of this evil prophecy we can happily in addition apply to it the test of experience and history.

When and where and how have Catholic Irishmen evinced a spirit of religious persecution and intolerance? If it be possible to show, as I contend that it is, that Irish Catholics are almost the only people in the world's history who have never persecuted for conscience sake, that when they had the supremacy in the past they never oppressed their Protestant fellow-countrymen, and that in matters in which they hold power to-day they make no distinction between men of different creeds—if it is possible to prove all this, what becomes of the evil prophecy of our enemies? There are four distinct times in the history of Ireland when the Catholics possessed supremacy and had the power to persecute and oppress their Protestant fellow-countrymen. These periods were (1) in the reign of Queen Mary; (2) in 1641; (3) at the time of the Catholic Parliament of 1689; and (4) at the present time, when Catholics have sufficient power in the commercial, social, and municipal life of Ireland to make a man's creed a disability to him if the

spirit of religious intolerance were abroad. Let me briefly deal with these four periods.

In the reign of Mary the Catholics were suddenly restored from persecution to power. They were fresh from oppression, for conscience sake, of the most horrible character. In England the change from persecution to power was marked by oppression of the Protestants by the Catholics. Mary burned to death her Protestant subjects; but the Irish Catholics did not persecute a single individual, and, on the contrary, it is admitted that the Corporation of Dublin of that day rented seventy-four houses and invited over English Protestant merchants from Bristol, and when Mary's persecution ceased, sent them and their families back safely to their homes. Leland, a Protestant historian, writing on this subject, says:—

“Such was the spirit of toleration that many English families, friends of the Reformation, took refuge in Ireland, and there enjoyed their opinions without molestation.”

And a Protestant writer, Taylor, in his *History of the Civil Wars of Ireland*, testifies as follows:—

“The restoration of the old religion was effected without violence; no persecution of the Protestants was attempted, and several of the English, who fled from the furious zeal of Mary's inquisitors, found a safe refuge among the Catholics of Ireland. It is but justice to this maligned body to add, that on three occasions of their obtaining the upper hand, they never injured a single person in life or limb for professing a religion different to their own. They had suffered persecution and learned mercy, as they showed in the reign of Mary, in the wars from 1641 to 1648, and during the brief triumph of James II.”

I pass now to the second period of the Catholic power—namely, 1641. As a sample of what the British electorate

were induced to believe last July, it will be interesting to you to hear a few words on this subject from a leaflet issued from Mr. Sidebottom, the successful Tory candidate for Hyde :—

“Q. Have the Irish ever had Home Rule, and how did they behave?”

“A. They murdered every Englishman and Protestant they could lay their hands on in 1641. They were set on by the priests, who said that Protestants were devils and served the devil, and that the killing of them was a meritorious act. Altogether they killed in that year 150,000 Protestants—men and women and children.”

This puts in a somewhat exaggerated form a very common accusation in the mouths of your enemies. The story of a wholesale massacre of Protestants in the rising of 1641 has been repeatedly proved to be utterly groundless. Mr. Lecky, whose bias cannot be said to be in favour of either the Catholics or Nationalists of Ireland, speaks of it as follows :—

“The rebellion only assumed its general character in consequence of the resolution of the English House of Commons, that no toleration should be henceforth granted to the Catholic religion in Ireland. It was this policy that drove the Catholic gentry of Ireland very reluctantly into rebellion. The rebellion was a defensive war, entered into in order to secure a toleration of the religion of the Irish people. . . . *It may boldly be asserted that the statement of a general and organized massacre is utterly and absolutely untrue.* As is almost the case with popular risings, there were in the first outbreak of the rebellion some murders, but there were very few, and there was nothing whatever in the nature of a massacre. . . . The rebellion was not one due to any single cause, but it represented the accumulated wrongs and animosities of two generations. All the long train of agrarian wrongs from Mullaglmast to the latest inquisitions of Wentworth, all the long succession of religious wrongs from the Act of Uniformity of Elizabeth to the Confiscation of the Irish College under Charles contributed to the result.”

The Protestant historian, Leland, says :—

“ The Catholic priests laboured zealously to moderate the excesses of war, and frequently protected Protestants when danger threatened them, by concealing them in their places of worship, and even under their altars.”

And the history of Dr. Bedell, the Protestant Bishop of Dromore, who during a considerable portion of the rising enjoyed the respect of the insurgents, and on his death was followed to his grave by one of O'Neill's regiments, is proof enough of the absurdity and untruthfulness of the story of a general massacre of Protestants.

The rebellion culminated in the assembling of the Confederation of Kilkenny, which was really a Catholic Parliament, and our enemies will search its records in vain for any single measure evincing a spirit of persecution.

I pass now to the third period, that of James's Parliament of 1689. In this Parliament there were only six Protestants members of the House of Commons, and some ten or twelve in the House of Lords. Yet, so far were the Catholics from excluding Protestants as Protestants from Parliament, that six Protestant Bishops sat in the House of Peers, and no Catholic Prelate was admitted at all. This Parliament consisted then for the most part of Catholics animated by the memory of the most bitter wrongs. They were the sons of men who without trial and without compensation had been robbed of their estates. The confiscations of Ulster, the fraud of Charles, the atrocities of Strafford, were to them recent and vivid events. At last, power had changed hands and rested with them. How did they use it? To persecute and oppress? To retaliate for old wrongs? No! The first act of that Parliament was to establish perfect religious equality, and to guarantee to Protestants full liberty of professing, practising, and teaching their religion.

On the evidences of religious toleration in the past history of Ireland, Mr. Lecky says:—

“ Irish history contains its full share of violence and massacre, but whoever will examine these episodes with impartiality, may easily convince himself that their connection with religion has been most superficial. Religious cries have been sometimes raised, religious enthusiasm has been often appealed to in the agony of a struggle ; but the real causes have usually been the conflicts of races and classes, the struggle of nationality against annihilation. Amongst the Catholics at least, religious intolerance has never been a prevailing vice, and those who have studied closely the history and character of the Irish people, can hardly fail to be struck with the deep respect for sincere religion in every form which they have commonly evinced. Their original conversion to Christianity was probably accompanied by less violence and bloodshed than that of any equally considerable nation in Europe ; and in spite of the fearful calamities which followed the Reformation, it is a memorable fact that not a single Protestant suffered for his religion in Ireland during all the period of the Marian persecution in England. The treatment of Bedell, a Protestant prelate, during the outbreak of 1641, and the act establishing liberty of conscience, passed by the Irish Parliament of 1689, in the full flush of the brief Catholic ascendancy under James II., exhibit very remarkably this aspect of the Irish character.”

The same spirit was displayed by Irish Catholics to the first Quaker mission ; and it is recorded that in 1712 James Hoskins, accompanied by several Dublin Quakers, went preaching his doctrines through Connemara, which was exclusively Catholic, without meeting with the slightest molestation. The experience of Wesley, half a century later, was similar. He has recorded in his journal that he found more respectful hearers amongst the Catholics of Ireland than in most parts of England ; and he speaks in warm appreciation of “ the tolerant spirit of the Catholics of Ireland.”

One word now as to the present, and I have done. At the present day Catholics have not the power of persecution by fire or sword ; but they possess a supremacy in many

directions which, if guided by a spirit of intolerance, could effectually harass and oppress the Protestant population. All the world knows how that power is used. When, in 1873, the representatives of the Irish people met in conference in this room to assert their demand for Home Rule, a resolution was unanimously adopted, and I am glad to remember it was proposed by my own father, in these words:—

“While we believe that in an Irish Parliament the rights and liberties of all classes of our countrymen would find their best and surest protection, we are willing that there should be incorporated in the Federal Constitution articles supplying the amplest guarantees, that no legislation shall be adopted to establish any religious ascendancy in Ireland, or to subject any person to disabilities on account of his religious opinions.”

From that day to this the Catholic majority has acted upon that principle. The most Catholic constituencies in Ireland return to-day Protestant members to Parliament. Catholic cities elect Protestants to the highest civic honours. Catholic Corporations employ Protestant officials; and last, but not least, the leader of the Irish race, to whom his Catholic fellow-countrymen are bound by the strongest links of personal affection and political devotion, is a Protestant Irishman. No! we Catholic Irishmen repudiate this accusation of intolerance with scorn and indignation. We do not even understand the meaning of the words religious bigotry. By the Irish nation we do not mean any class, or sect, or creed. By Irish independence we mean liberty for every Irishman, whether in his veins runs the blood of the Kelt or the Norman, the Cromwellian or the Williamite, whether he professes the ancient faith of Ireland, or that newer creed which has given to our country some of the bravest and purest of her patriots. We are banded

together in a struggle for our National rights, and, as a Catholic Irishman, I assert my belief, that never again would the Catholics of Ireland lift hand or voice to obtain an Irish Parliament did they not know that the edifice of National freedom which it would raise would be based upon the most perfect civil and religious liberty of every Irish man, of every class and creed.

In conclusion, it only remains for me to say that I trust I have established my propositions to your satisfaction, and to thank you for the indulgent patience with which you have heard me.

THOMAS DRUMMOND.

LECTURE DELIVERED IN THE ROTUNDA, DUBLIN,

ON 18TH FEBRUARY, 1889.

THE LORD MAYOR IN THE CHAIR.

VI.

THE subject which, after long consideration and with much diffidence, I have chosen for my lecture to-night is the Irish career of Thomas Drummond from the year 1835 until his death in 1840. My object in choosing this subject is to recall to the memory of the public the one solitary effort of English statesmanship, prior to the days of Mr. Gladstone, to give effect to the promises upon the faith of which the Union of 1800 was carried, and to rule Ireland as an integral portion of the United Kingdom by just and equal laws. Many of those Englishmen who to-day acknowledge that Home Rule is inevitable, often think with a sigh of vain regret of what might have been had the Union promises been fulfilled, or, at least, had English statesmanship made an honest effort to remove Irish grievances, to satisfy Irish wants, and to respect Irish ideas. I desire to-night to show that such an effort was made, that it was made honestly and courageously, and to point the moral that its complete and ignominious failure proves the inherent impossibility of a successful government of Ireland by an English Parliament and an English Executive. In the years of fierce agitation, of famine oppression, and insur-

rection which filled the decade immediately succeeding the overthrow of the Melbourne Administration, the memory of the courageous efforts of Thomas Drummond to rule Ireland justly was well-nigh lost; and from that day to this the traditions of English misgovernment have been so steadily maintained in Dublin Castle, that men have grown almost to forget that there ever was an English Administration which desired and honestly attempted to rule this country by confidence in her people and upon the principles of liberty and justice. The times in which we live to-day are, happily, more suitable for the recalling of such memories. The English people are at last beginning to understand this Irish question, and to appreciate the character of our struggle for national existence. So also the day has passed when Irishmen can speak any longer of the masses of the English people as their enemies, and the time has come when we can afford openly to testify our gratitude to those few English statesmen who in the past strove according to their lights to govern our country in the spirit of the Constitution.

My object to-night is, therefore, not only to show that government from Westminster, even when administered with sympathy and honesty of purpose, has proved an utter impossibility, but also to do justice to the memory of a man who, though a British official exercising his rule from Dublin Castle, loved Ireland and her people, deeply sympathised with their wrongs, and, in a certain sense, may be said to have sacrificed his life in an effort to redress them. The career of Thomas Drummond may be regarded as the history of a lucid interval in the mad misgovernment of Ireland. At this time the Union had been thirty-five years in existence. The very year it was passed the United Parliament carried a Coercion Act for Ireland, and during twenty-three

out of the thirty-five years which had elapsed, the Habeas Corpus had been suspended. Catholic Emancipation, which was dangled before the eyes of the prelates and people of Ireland as a bribe to tempt them to accept the Union, had only just been granted—not as a concession to justice, but as a concession to fear—after a long and fierce struggle inspired by the enthusiasm and directed by the wisdom of Daniel O’Connell. The Irish people had regarded Emancipation as a weapon by which they could with ease and promptitude wring all other reforms which were necessary. By the year 1835 they had found out that it was little better than a mockery and a delusion. Irish Catholics had been admitted in theory within the pale of the Constitution, and had even been permitted to hold seats in Parliament, but they were still excluded from all positions of real power, and the old system of governing Ireland in accordance with the wishes and interests of the Protestant Ascendancy remained in full force.

“In 1833,” says Mr. Lecky, “there was not in Ireland a single Catholic judge or stipendiary magistrate. All the high sheriffs, with one exception, the overwhelming majority of the unpaid magistrates and of the grand jurors, the five inspectors-general, and the thirty-two sub-inspectors of police, were Protestants. The chief towns were in the hands of narrow, corrupt, and, for the most part, intensely bigoted Corporations. Even in a Whig Government not a single Irishman had a seat in the Cabinet, and the Irish Secretary was Mr. Stanley, whose imperious manners and unbridled temper had made him intensely hated. For many years promotion had been steadily withheld from those who had advocated Catholic Emancipation, and the majority of the people then found their bitterest enemies in the foremost places.”

In truth, though Emancipation had been granted in theory, up to the year 1835, it had not commenced to exist in practice. The tithe war had raged for some years, and

the clergy of the rich church of the ascendancy faction collected their dues from the poverty-stricken Catholic peasantry by the aid of the bayonets and bullets of soldiery and police, and in the midst of scenes of misery and bloodshed. The state of poverty and misery of the agricultural population of the country was almost beyond description. Every effort to legislate in the interest of the tenantry had failed. The Poor-law inquiry of 1835 reported that 2,235,000 persons were out of work and in distress for thirty weeks in the year. O'Connell had boldly and consistently maintained that the only remedy alike for Irish discontent and Irish poverty was Repeal of the Union. But O'Connell was a far-seeing and reasonable man. He recognised the Union of 1800 as one of those great acts in the history of nations which, once accomplished, cannot easily be undone, and as an experiment which English statesmen could not be expected to abandon without a full and fair trial. It had lasted for 35 years, and had been the undoubted source of poverty, misery, degradation, and disaffection; but he was fain to confess that it had never as yet received a fair trial. O'Connell well knew that the mainspring of Irish hatred of the Union was the National spirit of the people, and that government from an English Parliament, even though well and wisely administered, never could come to be regarded as other than a state of slavery, and that no gilding of the chain could make it acceptable to the captive. But this was a lesson which he foresaw must be learned by English statesmen before the Union could be repealed.

Up to 1835 the Union had meant subjection, degradation, and tyranny in every form. The experiment had yet to be tried of honestly attempting to fulfil the promises of Pitt and Clare and Castlereagh by basing the Union upon equality of liberties, and laws, and privileges. In 1800 the Irish

people were promised that the Union would mean the admission within the Constitution of the native race and the recognition of the National religion; that Protestant ascendancy would cease to exist; that Ireland would become an integral part of the Empire, to be governed as England, and Scotland, and Wales, with equal laws and equal rights; and that the administration of Irish affairs would be entrusted to men possessing the confidence of the Irish people, as the administration of English and Scotch affairs was entrusted to men possessing the confidence of the English and Scotch peoples. The three nations were in a word to be welded into one kingdom, with common interests, aims, liberties, and laws. O'Connell well knew these promises were incapable of fulfilment, but he was ready to welcome every means whereby the failure of the Act of Union could be tested. The opportunity offered in 1835, and O'Connell willingly accepted it. The general election of that year made him master of the Parliamentary situation. He held the balance of power between the two rival English parties. He possessed a personal following of 44 members from Ireland, and by their votes he could turn the scale one way or the other in the House of Commons. Sir R. Peel held the reins of Government. The Liberal leaders were Lord Melbourne, Lord Althorp, afterwards Earl Spencer, and Lord John Russell. By the aid of the Irish vote the Peel Government were driven from office, and on April 7th Lord Melbourne formed his Administration.

This Administration depended for its existence from day to day upon the support of the Irish Party, and it was formed as the result of what is known in history as the Litchfield House compact, whereby O'Connell entered, upon certain terms, into an alliance with the Liberal Party. There is no act in the life of Daniel O'Connell about which opinion is

more sharply divided amongst his admirers than this alliance of his with the English Whigs. As viewed by its results its disadvantages are plainly discernible to-day. The National movement for Repeal was suspended for five years—five years most precious to a political leader already approaching old age. When in 1841 the Repeal movement was revived O'Connell was an old man. His energies were diminished, and much of his old power and vigour had departed, and it may truly be said no legislative boons obtained from the Melbourne Administration compensated either Ireland or himself for the five precious years which had been lost. However, it is no part of my duty to-night to enter into any very elaborate criticism of the Litchfield House compact. It is sufficient for my purpose to explain its nature, and to show that whether it was, from the point of view of an Irish Nationalist, a wise alliance or not, it at any rate was one entered into upon honourable terms by both the contracting parties. O'Connell was willing, if possible, to conciliate English public opinion, and Lord Melbourne may, I think, be credited with an honest desire to redress Irish grievances. The terms upon which the support of the Irish Party was promised to the new Administration were as follows:—Tithes were to be abolished, the surplus revenues of the Established Church were to be appropriated to purposes of general utility, the Corporations were to be reformed, the Parliamentary franchise was to be extended, and all coercive methods of government were to be abandoned. Thus the programme was twofold—legislative and executive. The legislative efforts of the Melbourne Government to do justice to Ireland may with truth be said to have ended in absolute failure. Of that failure I have little to say to-night, save to emphasise the fact that it rendered all the more arduous, and indeed impossible, the

attempts of the Executive Government to restore public order and tranquility in Ireland. Lord Mulgrave was appointed Lord Lieutenant, and Lord Morpeth Chief Secretary for Ireland, but the real genius of the new Administration was Lieutenant Thomas Drummond, who received the office of Under Secretary. Drummond was by birth a Scotchman, and at the time he accepted office in the Irish Government he was thirty-eight years old. He had served for some years in the Royal Engineers, and subsequently he learnt his first lessons in the arts of statesmanship as secretary to Lord Althorp during that nobleman's Chancellorship of the Exchequer. In 1831 he was appointed head of the Boundary Commission in connection with the Reform Bill. He was no stranger to Ireland. Between the years 1824 and 1830 he was engaged on the Ordnance Survey of this country, and then acquired a thorough knowledge of Irish wants, Irish aspirations, and Irish character. M'Lennan, in his memoir of Drummond, says:—

“Nearly the whole of 1827, 1828, and 1829 he spent in Ireland, passing the summer months in the country and the winter months in Dublin. In town and country he was an interested listener to discussions on Irish politics. No one could be in Ireland in those years, when the whole land was profoundly agitated by the final struggle of the Catholics for liberty, without going back on the history of this long enslavement and gradual emancipation. Lying on the mountain side at night, with the stars over his head, he would ‘draw out’ the Irish peasants who came to the engineers’ station from motives of curiosity or the hope of chance employment. No Cockney impudence, no sneer of superiority was ever visible in Drummond as he listened to the melancholy narration of some tale of suffering. Drummond liked to see all things with his own eyes. He saw, he studied, and, with his genial sympathy he felt the Irish character and nature. He believed that Government might work wonders in Ireland, and he had a head teeming with projects of reform, and a heart overflowing with affection for the Irish people. He sympathised with their sufferings, he felt their wrongs, he understood their history, and he yearned to

come amongst them and, by good government, to call forth their best instincts and to allay that spirit of resentment and vengeance which centuries of oppression and misrule had created."

Such was the man into whose hands the Executive Government of Ireland was committed in 1835. Never since the day when Lord Fitzwilliam landed in Dublin, amid the acclamations of the people, had a British Governor come to this country armed with so firm a purpose to do justice and amid such high hopes of success. In many respects the two epochs in Irish history bear a close resemblance. The old Ascendancy faction which rose in arms against Lord Fitzwilliam in 1795, which thwarted his policy of conciliation and finally drove him from the country, still held Ireland in its iron grasp in 1835. It confronted Drummond as it had confronted Fitzwilliam. He faced it with courage and determination, he checked its insolence and curbed its turbulence. For a time he triumphed over its power, but in the end the old anti-Irish and anti-Catholic prejudices of the English people came to the rescue of the Ascendancy, just as happened in 1795, and the policy of conciliation was wrecked. The government of Drummond must not be judged by its ultimate success or failure. In common justice let us judge it by its courage, its humanity, its high and honourable motives, knowing as we do that from the very nature of things its failure in making the Union acceptable was from the first inevitable. Drummond ruled Ireland from 1835 until his death in 1840. To do more than briefly enumerate the chief incidents of those years would be manifestly impossible within the narrow limits of time at my disposal this evening. His title to the affection and respect of the Irish people mainly rests upon these facts. He abandoned coercion as a method of government. He arrested the tithe war. He

repressed the Ascendancy faction. He rebuked the landlords. He clipped the wings of a corrupt magistracy. He gave a death blow to faction fights. He discouraged the employment of informers. He put a stop for the time being to the iniquitous system of jury-packing.

Let me say a few words on each of these matters. It was no small thing for an English Ministry to discard the familiar weapon of coercion in the government of Ireland. From the day the Union was carried down to the day when Thomas Drummond went to Dublin Castle, Ireland had never been for one single hour without a Coercion Act. As I have already pointed out, during twenty-three out of thirty-five years which had lapsed the Habeas Corpus had been suspended. In 1835 all those circumstances which are, even to this day, held to justify and indeed necessitate coercion, were in full force in Ireland. Profound discontent and fierce agrarian agitation prevailed. In looking back upon those times it is impossible not to feel devoutly thankful at the change which has occurred in the social condition of the country since then. We hear a great deal of outrages and crimes which have marked the progress of the present movement for agrarian reform and many innocent people seem honestly to believe that the Land League actually invented agrarian crime. The truth is, the sum total of all the murders and outrages which have occurred in Ireland for the last ten years would scarcely equal the total for one of the years 1832, '33, '34, or '35. The figures are appalling. The committals for murder and manslaughter alone were—In 1832, 620; in 1833, 687; in 1834, 575; in 1835, 712. When, therefore, Drummond proposed to rule without coercion in the midst of such a state of anarchy and crime. men thought he was mad. But astonishment soon gave

place to indignation and discontent amongst the dominant classes in Ireland, when the representative of English rule not only abandoned coercion, but plainly intimated that in his opinion landlordism alone was responsible for the horrors of agrarian outrage.

“All the experience of history showed that disputes as to the tenure of land were at the bottom of almost all the graver forms of outrage which invest the soil and blight the social system of Ireland. Eviction proceedings, so long as the condition of Ireland remained what it had long been, nay more, while human nature was what it was, would beget resistance. The flesh will quiver where the pincers tear.”

Such were the words in which the demands for renewed coercion from the landlords were met by the new Governors of Ireland. Drummond well knew and openly said that disturbances would continue so long as the grievances which gives rise to them remained unredressed. Coercion he regarded not only as a hateful weapon, but as an absolutely injurious expedient. If Parliament legislated justly for Ireland, he hoped by its co-operation to put an end to agrarian outrage. If Parliament refused to do its duty, yet he hoped by a just and firm administration of the ordinary law to wean the people from at least the grosser forms of crime. He failed in exterminating agrarian crime, but he succeeded in diminishing it. In 1836 and 1837 there was a general decrease of crime as compared with former years, and at assize after assize the judges congratulated the grand juries upon the improvement which had taken place. So far as the Executive authority was concerned, the Government of Ireland was succeeding, but without legislative co-operation, in removing the grievances which were the real source of crime; ultimate success was an impossibility. This Drummond well knew, but with undaunted courage he stuck to his task, and

resolutely refused from first to last to have recourse to coercion as a means of government. I think it would probably be impossible to find in the history of any country in Europe a more striking and significant contrast than might be drawn between the Government of Thomas Drummond and the Government of Mr. Balfour. In nothing is this contrast more marked than in the manner in which the forces of the Crown were employed to uphold and enforce the law in 1835 and in 1888.

The principle that the law should be enforced by all the power at the disposal of the Executive is, of course, a sound one; but the civilised world has of recent years been shocked by the spectacle in Ireland of a Government sending military and police to uphold, by bayonets and bullets, laws which they themselves have acknowledged to be unjust.

Mr. Balfour's Government were last year forced to admit that the arrears of old exorbitant rents, rents since reduced by the Land Commission, were excessive and unjust; and yet wholesale evictions for these same arrears are being carried out day after day, and the people are remorselessly driven from their homes by means of the armed forces of the Crown.

Far different was the action of Thomas Drummond in 1835. He did not allow any talk about the unconstitutional character of a "dispensing power" to prevent him from refusing to perpetrate injustice in the name of law. When he arrived in Ireland the tithe war was in full swing. The iniquity of the system which forced the impoverished Catholic peasant to support the clergy of the rich Ascendancy faction had scarcely a defender left in Parliament or out of it. The injustice of tithes had come to be as generally admitted as the injustice of arrears of rack rents to-day. Yet tithes remained enforceable by law, as unjust arrears are enforceable to-day.

For five years prior to Drummond's arrival in Dublin the Papist peasants had been shot down or bayonnetted almost month by month by the forces of the Crown for resisting tithes. At a score of places pitched battles had been fought, and much innocent blood had been shed. Drummond once and for all put an end to this. He absolutely refused to allow a single policeman or soldier to help in the collection of tithes. He at once drew down upon his devoted head the wrath of the Ascendancy faction. The old cries about "law and order" and the iniquity of the "dispensing power" were dinned into his ears. He was assailed in the Press and in Parliament. He was denounced as a traitor and a revolutionary. He, however, stood firm as a rock.

"It is my duty," said he, "to maintain law and order, and I shall do so. It is not my duty to turn the police and military into tithe collectors. Collect your unjust tithes as well as you can. I shall take care that the peace shall not be broken. But your tithe bailiffs and your parsons shall have no police or military escort from me."

By this one bold act he arrested the tithe war. From the day he landed in Ireland until the day he died the police and the people never once came into collision, and not one single tithe bailiff or proctor was injured, though during the five years previous the lives of such men were not supposed to be worth a single day's purchase. That Parliament tinkered with the tithe question instead of boldly grappling with it was the fault of Drummond. Pending the amendment of the law he preserved the public peace, and by refusing to allow the old unjust law to be enforced by bayonet and bullet he saved the spilling of much innocent blood, and the working of much cruel wrong upon the people. From the very commencement the new policy of conciliation was bitterly opposed by what I may call the loyal minority of that day. As usual, the Orangemen of

Ulster were the loudest in denouncing the authors of a policy of peace and justice, and in proclaiming themselves to be the only loyal men in Ireland. Drummond determined to expose their pretensions and curb their insolence. Their power at this day was most formidable. Mr. M'Lennan says:—

“In 1835–36 the proportions assumed by Orangeism became exceedingly alarming. It numbered no less than 1,500 lodges (with secret oaths and passwords), affiliated with one another under the direction of a Grand Lodge, whose head was the Duke of Cumberland. A Commission of Inquiry brought out the fact that there were Orange Lodges even in the army. In 1836 there were 200,000 armed Orangemen in Ireland. They were accustomed to meet in armies of 10,000, 20,000, and even 30,000 at a time.”

How the warlike soul of Mr. Johnston, of Ballykilbeg, must sigh over the departed glories of Orangeism, and how he must curse the memory of Thomas Drummond, the man who, of all others, did most to shatter the power and expose the dishonesty of the Loyal Orange Society. Not only was the Orange Society accused of being the cause of disorder and turbulence in Ireland, but it transpired that these loud-mouthed loyalists had actually hatched a treasonable plot to alter the succession to the Throne, and consequently immediate steps were taken for the suppression of the organisation. Parliament presented an address to the King, praying for its dissolution, and the Orange demonstrations continuing to take place—the Society itself was actually dissolved. The spirit in which Drummond acted towards the Orange faction is well shown by his correspondence with Colonel Verner, an Orange leader of high position and power. The gallant Colonel, at a public banquet, had given the toast of “The Battle of the Diamond.” The event commemorated by this toast was practically the establishment of the Orange Society in 1795, after a bloody conflict in which the people

had been slaughtered by the Ascendancy faction at a village in County Armagh called the Diamond. Drummond at once wrote to Colonel Verner in the following terms:—

“It appearing in the *Newry Telegraph* that at an election dinner given by you, one of the toasts was ‘The Battle of the Diamond,’ I am desired by His Excellency to desire that you will inform him whether it can be possible that you were a party to the commemoration of a lawless and most disgraceful conflict, in which much of the blood of your fellow subjects was spilt, and the immediate consequence of which was to place that part of the country at the mercy of an ungovernable mob.”

It would be impossible to describe the indignation of the loyal minority at these words. Here was the Orange Society spoken of as an “ungovernable mob,” and one of its most glorious victories, as a “lawless and most disgraceful conflict.” The two hundred thousand armed loyalists metaphorically brandished their swords on high and swore to be revenged. But Drummond met them boldly. Colonel Verner stood by his toast, and he was forthwith summarily removed from the commission of the peace. A military force of twelve and a half troops of cavalry and thirty-four companies of infantry was dispatched to the North, and then the fire-eating loyal minority were soon cowed, and the power of the Orangeism completely broken. While Drummond was thus coping with Orangeism in the North, he was at the same moment in bitter conflict with the landlords of the South. Agrarian outrages were occurring, and each one of them was made a pretext for louder and louder demands from the landlord faction for renewed coercion. At last, Drummond determined to speak out, and he plainly intimated upon whose shoulders in his opinion rested the primary responsibility for Irish agrarian crimes. The famous letter which he addressed to the magistrates of Tipperary left no

one in any doubt as to his views upon the subject. He wrote as follows:—

“The Government has been at all times ready to afford the utmost aid in its power to suppress disturbance and crimes, and its efforts have been successful so far as regards open violations of the law, but there are certain classes of crime originating in other causes which are much more difficult of repression, and it becomes of importance to consider the causes which have led to a state of society so much to be deplored. When the character of the great majority of serious outrages occurring in many parts of Ireland is considered, it is impossible to doubt that the causes from which they mainly spring are connected with the tenure and occupation of land. *Property has its duties as well as its rights.* To the neglect of those duties is mainly to be ascribed that diseased state of society in which such crimes take their rise, and it is not in the enactment or enforcement of statutes of extraordinary severity, but in the better and more faithful discharge of those duties and the more enlightened and humane exercise of those rights, that a permanent remedy for such disorders is to be sought.”

This letter produced nothing short of a panic amongst the landlord faction; and it speaks volumes for what Irish landlordism had been in Ireland that the mere enunciation of the plain doctrine that property had its duties as well as its rights should have been regarded as most dangerous and revolutionary. About the same time Drummond spoke out with similar directness as to the manner in which justice was administered by the local magistrates, whose one object upon the Bench seemed to be to ride roughshod over the people. Here are his words:—

“Grossly have the magistrates abused their powers; but their wings are clipped, and I hope and believe that there is some chance of justice being better administered soon, and ultimately being well administered. The confidence of the people is now withheld from the local courts, and no wonder.”

To restore the confidence of the people in the administration of justice, Drummond laboured long and courageously.

He firmly discountenanced the use of informers by the Government, and under his directions the practice of ordering all Catholic jurors to "stand by" when called to serve upon juries, which is in full force to-day, half a century later, under an Irish Catholic Attorney-General, was for the time being abandoned. And yet, in spite of all this, Drummond failed in his efforts to rule Ireland. He came to this country full of hope and confidence. He counted upon the good faith of English statesmen, the co-operation of the English Parliament, and the sympathy of the English people. He soon discovered that English statesmanship regarded Ireland simply as a battle-ground for party politics, that the English Parliament was bigoted, ignorant, and incompetent, and that the masses of the English people were hopelessly apathetic. He struggled on bravely to the end, hoping against hope, until in 1840 death cut short his work. For the last twelve months the ultimate and complete failure of his efforts to base the Union upon justice and liberty had come to be recognised even by himself. He was fain to acknowledge that the Ascendancy faction was too strong for him. Day by day their hostility increased in bitterness. A hundred intrigues were set on foot against him. All the latent anti-Irish prejudices of the English people were aroused; all the anti-Catholic bigotry of Great Britain was evoked.

The Melbourne Administration was hourly becoming more and more distrusted and unpopular in England because of its Irish policy. Its leaders had ceased even to think of fulfilling their promises to Ireland, and thought only of how they could serve their own positions as statesmen of the Empire. Drummond alone stood firm by his promises and his principles—as constant and faithful in the face of failure as he had been when his hopes of success were high. But

he was a man of sensitive mind and delicate physique. His incessant labours and his ever present sense of failure were beginning to tell upon him. His health was rapidly breaking down. In vain his friends urged upon him to abandon his post. He resolutely refused. At last, in April, 1840, he broke down. Up to the day in which he took to his bed he had been actively engaged upon his duties, and he may be truly said to have died with his harness on him. His last illness lasted but three days. Death then stilled his brave heart for ever. His last request was that he might be buried in Ireland. "I have loved her well," said he, with his dying breath, "I have served her faithfully, and lost my life in her service." His last wish was carried out, and all that is mortal of Thomas Drummond lies at rest in our midst in this city, in a quiet corner of Harold's Cross Cemetery. With his death the only vital force in the Melbourne Administration was extinguished. Shortly afterwards the Ministry went to pieces.

In 1841 Sir Robert Peel succeeded to office. The old policy of coercion and proscription was then revived. The Repeal agitation sprang into life again. Then followed State prosecutions, national turmoil, famine, crime, and finally insurrection. The Union had received its chance, it had had its fair trial, it had been weighed in the balance and found wanting, and from that day forward there was no possible alternative between the restoration of Ireland's legislative independence and national heartburning, discontent, and agitation. To-day, with the prospect of near success for our cause, with the friendship and sympathy of so many millions of Englishmen, and with the advocacy of the greatest Englishman of the century upon our side, it is an easy and a pleasant task to pay to the memory of Thomas Drummond the tribute of our respect and gratitude. His

name is written in letters of gold upon the sad and blood-stained page of Irish history.

A grateful Irish people, even in the midst of national suffering and despair, a generation ago gave to a statue of Drummond an honoured place in the City Hall of Dublin, where it stands to-day side by side with the figures of Lucas, Grattan and O'Connell; and we to-day honour his memory as that of an honest and brave man who loved our country and sought to do her justice, and whose efforts, ending as they did in failure, have incontestably established the fact that the Legislative Union, based as it was upon fraud and carried by force and corruption, can never be an instrument of good government in Ireland, even when administered by just, capable, and sympathetic hands.

WEXFORD IN '98.

LECTURE DELIVERED IN THE ROTUNDA, DUBLIN,

22ND NOVEMBER, 1897.

PIERCE MAHONY, ESQ., IN THE CHAIR.

VII.

THE subject which I have chosen for my lecture this evening is that chapter of Irish history which tells of the rising in Wexford County in the year 1798. I have chosen this subject for many reasons. First of all, it is one which can scarcely fail to prove interesting alike to the student of history, who sees in the memorable events of that epoch, revealed in a fierce light, the faults and the virtues of a people; to the politician, to whom those events should serve as a reminder that theories of Government are valueless which are not based on the will of the people, and upon some consideration for human nature and human passion; and, above all, to the man of Irish birth or descent, who, whatever may be his political predilections to-day, and whatever may be his creed, cannot review, without emotion and pride, the chivalrous devotion with which his forefathers, Catholic and Protestant alike, laid down their lives for the liberties of Ireland. For myself, I may be pardoned for saying, that this subject is one which, from my very earliest youth, has exercised a powerful fascination upon my mind. This is but natural. I had been reared and nurtured in the midst of the hills and valleys that witnessed the struggles of

'98; I had been taught to regard every scene as a monument of the heroism of our forefathers, and to remember that well-nigh every sod beneath my feet marked a hero's sepulchre. My boyish ears had listened to tales of '98 from the lips of old men who had themselves witnessed the struggles, and I scarcely know a family amongst the peasantry of my native county who cannot tell of a father or grandfather or some near relative who died fighting at Wexford, at Oulart, or Ross. Every scene most familiar to my early youth was associated with some tale of heroism or suffering, and one of my proudest recollections has ever been, as it is to-day, that in that dark hour of trial there were not wanting men of my race and name who attested by their lives to their devotion to Ireland.

There is, probably, no chapter of Irish history less generally understood than that which deals with the rising in Wexford. The entire character of the rising is misunderstood. Outside Ireland the popular theory is that it was a popish rebellion, marked by deeds of cruelty on the part of the people: an unprovoked outburst of bigotry and malignity. The very reverse is the truth. Of the 162 leaders whose names have been transmitted to us 106 were Protestants and only 56 Catholics; and Dr. Madden assures us in his interesting work that, alike in origin and organisation, the so-called conspiracy was essentially a Protestant one. That the people were deliberately driven into resistance by unheard-of cruelties, as part and parcel of a set plan to render possible the Act of Union; that the rising was marked by deeds of heroism by the people, worthy of an imperishable place on the page of history; in a word, that Irishmen have reason to be proud of the memories of '98; these are some of the things which I hope to prove to you to-night.

I propose confining my remarks to what occurred in the county of Wexford. To deal with the rising in Ireland generally, and the proud though sad history of the lives and deaths of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, the Sheares, Wolfe Tone, and other leaders, would be too extensive a subject for my purpose; but, in order that what occurred in Wexford may be properly understood, it will be necessary for me briefly to refer to the origin and progress of the conspiracy of the United Irishmen. When in 1782 Grattan established the independence of the Irish Parliament he laid the foundations of a free and prosperous nation, but that was only the beginning. The Parliament itself whose independence had been secured was corrupt and venal; it in no sense represented the people, four-fifths of whom were in the position of slaves. Ireland, it is quite true, prospered as never before or since, but Parliamentary purification and the emancipation of Catholics were necessary to permanent prosperity and independence. To secure, this Grattan and a minority in the House gave their best energies, but they had opposed to them the weight of English influence and gold, and, as effort after effort of the champion failed, a deep despair settled on the hearts of the people. Grattan, himself, almost abandoned the struggle, and the design of a Parliamentary union was already whispered about in Ministerial circles. It was then that the United Irishmen sprang into existence, with the object of perpetuating for Ireland national self-government by Parliamentary reform and the emancipation of Catholics. This society was started in 1791 at Belfast. The first leaders were Theobald Wolfe Tone and Dr. Neilson, two Protestant gentlemen of consideration, and I find in its articles of association that its objects are very clearly set out. They are as follow:—

"First.—Resolved that the weight of English influence in the government of this country is so great as to require a cordial union among all the people of Ireland, to maintain that balance which is essential to the preservation of our liberties and the extension of our commerce."

"Second.—That the sole constitutional mode by which this influence can be opposed is by a complete and radical reform of the representation of the people in Parliament."

"Third.—That no reform is practicable, efficacious, or just which shall not include Irishmen of every religious persuasion."

Thus it will be seen that this society was at first an open, legal, and constitutional one. Its power in Ireland rapidly spread, and men of the highest rank and position joined it. Its influence was powerful within and without the walls of Parliament. It was leading the Irish people along the only sure road to permanent independence by the union of creeds for a common country. Very soon a remarkable triumph was achieved, for, in 1793, through its influence, was carried through the Irish Parliament a Catholic Relief Bill—that is the Irish Protestant Parliament in '93 commenced the emancipation which the Imperial Parliament had not the courage to adopt till after 1828. This Catholic Relief Bill seemed to everybody the prelude to a complete act of Catholic emancipation, but English Ministers, whose minds were bent and hearts set upon a legislative union, determined to destroy the society, and fan into life the smouldering embers of sectarian hate, which, by dividing the people, destroyed their power.

On the 4th May, 1794, the agents of the Government burst into a meeting of the United Irishmen's Society in Dublin, seized the documents, arrested the officers, and declared the society illegal. From that moment the character of the society changed. From an open society it became a secret one, and from a peaceful combination it

became a revolutionary organisation ; despairing of obtaining the liberties of their country by peaceful means, the leaders had recourse to the desperate expedient of revolution. From the very moment of the new departure, Government spies and informers were put to work, and hour by hour the Government were informed of every plan agreed upon, and every step taken ; and then the diabolical scheme was formed of forcing the people into insurrection as a means to enable British Ministers to carry the Union. In 1795 Lord Fitzwilliam, a liberal and popular nobleman, who occupied the position of viceroy, was recalled, and Lord Camden, the personification of oppression and injustice, given his place. In the same year the Orange Society was established in Ireland, the members of which were obliged to swear—these are the exact words of the test oath—"To use their utmost exertions to annihilate the Catholics of the kingdom of Ireland," who formed four-fifths of the population. At once the fires of bigotry and sectarian animosity were enkindled all over Ireland. Plowden says that in one year, in one county—the County of Armagh—7,000 Catholics were driven from their homes and put to the sword. In 1796, the following year, two Acts of Parliament were carried—one an Indemnity Act, which had the effect of assuring magistrates against being called to account for any illegal act ; and the second an Insurrection Act for the arrest, imprisonment, and torture of persons suspected of disloyalty. The *Habeas Corpus* Act was suspended, troops were drafted into Ireland to such an extent that, before the end of the year, the Government had at its disposal a fighting force of regulars and yeomanry of 160,000 men, and everywhere the instructions were to goad the people into insurrection by cruelties of every kind. Then blazed forth the insurrection of '98, and English Ministers, who

had themselves planned it as a diabolical means to an unholy end, looked on with grim callousness at the working out of their scheme.

I have said that I did not intend to deal with the rising in Ireland generally; but I may say that, owing to the want of proper munitions of war, military training, and capable leaders, and to treachery more strong than foeman's arms, the rising throughout Ireland failed, and noble hearts were sacrificed to its failure. There was, however, one spot in Ireland, neglected by the leaders of the movement as apathetic, but which soon engaged and proved more than a match for the armies and generals of England. There, in the little County of Wexford, the most stirring scenes of '98 were enacted; and there, where the preparation was least, the struggle was most severe. In point of fact, the conspiracy had taken no root in Wexford at all. In the list of places to be relied upon, prepared by Lord Edward Fitzgerald in '98, the name of Wexford does not appear.

Its people were renowned for their peaceful and industrious habits. English writers had been wont, by way of paying it the highest compliment in their power, to compare it to parts of England. One thing is certain, the people of Wexford have little or no claim to Keltic origin. The Keltic O and Mac are seldom to be found in that county, while the names most familiar are, for instance, those of Whitty, Lambert, Devereaux, Synnot, Lacy, Petit, Rocheford, and Redmond—pointing to their Norman or Flemish origin. Sober, industrious, and frugal, the people of this county had made their land prosperous when the rest of Ireland was literally steeped in poverty. Mr. Hay, in his work upon this subject, speaks thus of the people of Wexford:—

“The county of Wexford had long been remarkable for the peaceful demeanour of its inhabitants, and their good behaviour and industry have been held out as an exemplar for other parts of Ireland. So little and so seldom infested with disturbance or riots of any kind that an execution for a capital crime rarely took place there; and, in the calendar of its criminals, it has as few on record as any part either of Great Britain or Ireland. This county bore such reputation that landed property was considered of higher value in it than in many other parts of the country, purchasers not hesitating to advance some years' rental more for lands in the county of Wexford than for the like in most other parts of Ireland.”

And Thomas Campbell Foster, an English barrister, says:—

“In the baronies of Forth and Bargy, at this day, it is difficult to see any marked difference between the appearance of the country or the people and England or its population. There are the same cleanliness, order, and neatness. Great industry prevails amongst a peaceable and well-disposed people . . . comfort and contentment, the rewards of industry, are everywhere seen.”

So much for the peasantry. Now, amongst the gentry of Wexford the landlords, for the most part, were liberal, kindly disposed men, whose difference in creed did not prevent their sympathising with the people. There, then, would seem to have been all the elements likely to prevent the possibilities of a rising. How was it then that peaceful, industrious, and contented Wexford blazed suddenly forth into a war which startled the world? The only possible explanation is the true one, that the people were deliberately driven into insurrection by the action of the authorities. I do not make that statement rashly. Let me see what are my authorities. Lord Castlereagh himself—has left upon record those memorable, those infamous words, which are enough to condemn him to everlasting infamy:—

“Measures were taken by the Government to secure the outburst of the rebellion.”

What were these measures? In April, '98, notwithstanding the risings throughout Ireland elsewhere, Wexford was in a state of almost profound peace.

There were some 500 soldiers only in the county. Suddenly, Lord Kingsborough, at the head of the infamous North Cork Militia, arrived in the county; at once that county was proclaimed under martial law, the yeomanry were billeted upon the people, and then commenced the reign of terror—a series of outrages upon the peaceable and defenceless people of so horrible a character that I dare not trust to my own words to describe them. Let me rather describe them in the words of Englishmen. Lord Holland, in his memoirs of the Whig party, says :—

“It is a fact incontrovertible that the people were driven to resistance by free quarters and the excesses of the soldiery, which were such as are not permitted in civilised warfare even in an enemy's country. Trials, if they may be so called, were frequent under court-martial, such court-martial being comprised of three officers, two being generally under twenty-one years old, and the third an Orangeman who had sworn to exterminate the people over whom he was placed as judge. Floggings, picketings, death, and pitch-cap were the usual sentences. Property was everywhere seized, women violated, and houses burned.”

And Lord Cornwallis, who came to Ireland as Viceroy shortly after the suppression of the insurrection, wrote as follows to the Duke of Portland :—

“The militia and yeomanry are wholly without discipline ; they are contemptible in the face of the enemy, but ferocious and cruel in the extreme when any poor wretches without arms come within their power. Murder is their favourite pastime. The Government have pursued in Ireland measures which could only end in exterminating the greater part of the community and the destruction of the country. By their policy they seem to have desired to drive four-fifths of the population into irreconcilable rebellion. Their minds were satisfied

with nothing but blood ; numberless murders were hourly committed by our people ; in short, we have been engaged in a war of plunder and massacre."

Lord Moira, in the Irish House of Lords, said :—

"It was the usual practice, when a man was taken up on suspicion, to put him to the torture. Picketing was a favourite practice—that is, to put the man standing on one foot on a pointed stake ; and as many as thirty houses have been burned in one night in one locality by the yeomanry."

This conduct had been censured by Sir Ralph Abercrombie, the Commander-in-Chief, but before the outbreak in Wexford he was recalled, and replaced by General Lake, who not only tolerated but openly approved of these barbarities.

In the English House of Commons that champion of human liberty, Charles James Fox, moved a motion expressing his abhorrence of the action of the Government in Wexford and other parts of Ireland ; and I find that Lord Bedford, in the English House of Lords, described what had been done in Ireland as "shocking to humanity and disgraceful to the British name," and he adduced documentary evidence to prove that :—

"These cruelties had not been resorted to on the spur of the moment, but had been deliberately resolved upon long before for a certain political purpose, and could not be justified."

I have superabundant evidence from the writings of English historians that almost every conceivable kind of torture was invented. Lord Kingsborough has the infamous notoriety of having been the designer of the pitch cap ; a cap which was lined with melted pitch, and placed on the victim's head, from which it was torn as soon as the pitch had grown cold.

The people everywhere were driven from their houses, and, wandering about hopeless and homeless through their fair and fertile county, they saw within the space of a few days no less than thirty-five Catholic chapels burned to the ground.

Patiently, all too patiently, the people submitted until submission became no longer possible, and then, when forbearance appeared in the light of a crime, they rose, and unarmed and undisciplined, though they were, they turned upon their aggressors, and, with the fierce courage born of despair, they routed them from town, and hamlet, and hill-side, until England herself stood aghast at the fire she had kindled, but which she was no longer able to control.

So was provoked—so was begun—the war in Wexford county.

al Let me, as briefly as I can, sketch some of its principal incidents. The first man to raise the standard of the people was Father John Murphy, of Boolavogue. Up to this time he had been known solely for the zeal and piety with which he had discharged the duties of his sacred office, and for his high literary attainments. He was essentially a man of peace, and he had, from the commencement, been amongst those who had most strenuously worked to restrain the people. At last, however, seeing his people driven from their homes, which were given over to the flames by the yeomanry, he placed himself at their head, and, calling upon them, as they had followed him in peace to follow him in war, he told them to defend with their lives their liberties and their homes. This appeal was answered by the acclamations of the people, and soon he found himself at the head of a body of men entirely undisciplined, almost entirely unarmed, but filled with a fierce courage and enthusiasm. He determined without one moment's delay, to give battle to

the enemies of his country, and marching forth with his somewhat motly array, badly clothed and worse armed, a peasantry whose most effective weapon was a pitchfork or a sythe, he soon met a body of yeomanry cavalry riding in pomp and pride back from their daily work of devastation.

Such was the onslaught of these unarmed peasants, the fight lasted but a very few moments, and the victory of the people was complete. They speedily possessed themselves of the arms and accoutrements of their vanquished foes, and so rapidly did the news of their victory spread through the county, that the next morning Father Murphy found recruits coming to him from all quarters, until at last he found himself in a sufficiently strong position to give battle to the best troops of the enemy.

At this time the infamous North Cork Militia—may I digress for a moment to explain what I hope nearly every one in this room knows, that this regiment was Irish only in name; it was a body of yeomanry composed of Englishmen, or of the Ascendancy class of Ireland. This infamous regiment, whose name had become a terror throughout the whole of Ireland were stationed in Wexford town, and they received instructions to annihilate the rash and rebellious peasants who had dared to oppose them. They marched forth to meet Father Murphy's army, and they met at historic Oulart Hill. Here the first decisive battle of the campaign was fought. Here the people found themselves, for the first time, face to face with the men who had devastated their country and murdered their kith and kin. The result startled England to her very centre, and gave heart and hope to every Irishman at home. So desperate was the onset of the Irish pikemen that they literally scattered as chaff before the winds the serried ranks of their enemies. The yeomanry with their usual cowardice in the face

of valour very soon turned and fled and the regular troops who were with them, and who stood their ground, were utterly annihilated; and it is left on record that only four soldiers and one officer escaped alive from the battlefield to bring back to Wexford town the tidings of the victory.

At once, as if by magic, the whole county of Wexford sprang to arms, and their indomitable leader, John Murphy, flushed with victory, determined to push on to Enniscorthy. At this time Enniscorthy was held by a large garrison of some thousands of well-equipped, well-trained English troops. The plan of attack which Father Murphy adopted evinced considerable military skill and genius. He ordered a large herd of wild cattle to be driven in advance of his front lines, and behind these the rest of his army safely advanced to the town. Father Kavanagh, in his valuable work, to which I am largely indebted for many details, gives the following account of the scene to which I refer. Father Kavanagh says:—

“This stratagem was tried and proved completely successful. The cattle used for this purpose—the youngest and wildest of the herd—were driven quickly to the front, and thence onwards towards the gate. They no sooner heard the wild shouts of those who drove them than they set forward at a rapid pace in the required direction, the agile pikemen following closely upon their heels, and thus approaching unharmed the line of their armed foes. The latter, perceiving the wild herd advancing furiously upon them, and hearing from the rear, above the bellowing of the maddened beasts, the louder and fiercer shouts of their dreaded foes, endeavoured with all their might to check the cattle in their furious advance. To effect this some of the soldiery rushed forward to drive them back with the bayonet, while others fired their muskets into the midst of the herd. But all their efforts were unavailing to arrest that furious onset, for the cattle, goaded to madness by the yells of the men in the rear, and, when they attempted to turn back or slacken their pace, feeling the sharp points of the pikes, charged furiously forward into the ranks of the dismayed soldiery and opened the way for a more dreaded foe—for, with a wild cheer of revenge and hatred,

the pikemen were amongst them. Not a moment's stand did they make against the peasants whose destruction they had but lately sworn to accomplish. The remembrance of the fearful wrongs they had endured—their burned homesteads—their tortured or murdered friends—nerved the peasant's arm, and heightened the courage of his brave heart. Success, too, had given him confidence in himself, and days of hard fighting, had given him something of the soldier's heedlessness of life. The King's troops completely routed, fled with the utmost precipitation into the town, and the day was won."

Once in possession of the town the Irish army used their position with admirable self-restraint and humanity. Not one single outrage upon person or property was committed; no single man amongst their foes was put to the sword; and it must ever remain to the lasting honour of these "savages," as the English historians call them, that in their hour of triumph they did not imitate the example which had been set them by the "civilised" troopers of England.

The day after the storming of the town, Father Murphy withdrew his troops, and stationed them on historic Vinegar Hill. Vinegar Hill is a rather abrupt hill hanging over the town of Enniscorthy, and there is, perhaps, no spot in Wexford county around which hang to-day more touching memories, more pathetic stories. Here, for the remainder of the campaign, were the head quarters of the Irish army, and hither recruits day by day flocked to the standard of the people.

In Wexford town itself at this time the English began to get seriously alarmed, and they determined to make an effort to come to terms with the Irish army. Consequently they released two popular Protestant gentlemen of large estates in Wexford county who had shortly before been imprisoned because they were suspected of favouring the popular cause. Mr. Colclough and Mr. Fitzgerald, and asked them to go to Vinegar Hill and see if they could make terms with the

insurgents. I need scarcely say that their mission was unsuccessful. Rightly regarding such a deputation at all as a sign of weakness, the Irish leaders determined to push on to Wexford town. They started at once, and that night they encamped on the Three Rock Mountains, just overhanging Wexford.

Now, let me say at this time Wexford was a walled and fortified town, and was held by a garrison of well-trained and well-armed English troops. There were ample provisions in the town, and with ordinary courage and determination the English ought to have been able to hold out against any attempt on the part of the Irish; but the terror inspired by the previous victories of the popular army was such that the English generals made up their minds to surrender. And they did so in a thoroughly characteristic and dishonourable fashion. They sent a flag of truce by a messenger to the Irish camp, and while a parley was taking place, and hostilities were suspended, they secretly withdrew their troops, setting fire to the town as they went. Filled with indignation at this dishonourable stratagem, the Irish troops defiled down the hill and took possession of the town.

And here again the marvellous self-restraint and humanity of an undisciplined army excites wonder and admiration. Not one of the English partisans remaining in the town was put to the sword.

The town rapidly resumed all the appearances of rejoicing, and the victorious Irish army marched, with colours flying, through the streets, the quaint old houses were decked with green, and fair faces at every window waving welcome to the soldier peasants. The State prisoners were released from gaol; Bagnall Harvey, a Protestant gentleman of large estates, was appointed commander-in-chief, and then,

amid universal congratulations, the people and their leaders set about the task of establishing a civil government, and completely restoring social order.

Wexford town had witnessed many an historic scene. It was here that, gathered round the old Keltic cross, 300 helpless women and innocent children were butchered by Cromwell and his soldiers. Many a sad scene was enacted in that town; but the scene of triumph I have described compensated for all.

The Irish army was now divided into two battalions. One under the command of Father John Murphy and Father Philip Roche proceeded back to Enniscorthy, Newtownbarry, and Gorey, until the whole north of the county was under their control. The second battalion was under General Harvey, who proceeded to the attack of New Ross, the only remaining town of importance remaining in the hands of the English. Upon the efforts of this second battalion the result of the final struggle depended, and the battle of New Ross was the turning point. The town was the most important military position of the whole county, affording communication, as it did, with Waterford and the rest of Munster; and the English, recognizing the importance of the place, garrisoned it with some thousands of disciplined troops under General Johnson. Harvey occupied a position three-quarters of a mile outside the town, on Corbett Hill; and he sent a flag of truce to the English army, calling for the surrender of the town, to save life and property, but the bearer, Mr. Furlong, was shot down as he approached the ranks of the enemy.

Harvey had laid elaborate plans of attack, but his troops, when they saw this dastardly outrage, thirsting for revenge, burst headlong to the fray. New Ross was a fortified town, and the black buttresses of the Three Bullet Gate tell to

this day of the conflict which the spot witnessed, and there stands a Keltic cross to the memory of the men who fell upon the spot, erected by their sons. At this gate the struggle was fearful. The Irish were mowed down by the English artillery, but fresh lines took their places; after hours of struggle and fearful losses the Irish forced the gates, driving the English troops down the precipitous streets, and never stopping till they had driven them into or across the River Barrow, which skirts the town.

To the courage of the Irish in this encounter, an Englishman, Sir Richard Musgrave, a bitter enemy of Ireland, has borne testimony. He says:—

“Such was the enthusiasm, that though whole ranks of them were seen to fall, they were succeeded by others who seemed to court the fate of their companions by rushing on our troops with renewed ardour.”

Alas, that such intrepidity should have had such a sequel! For the first time in the campaign, the Irish troops, in the moment of victory, gave way to excesses. Harvey, who showed but little courage or wisdom, lost all control over the troops, who gave themselves up to intemperance. The English troops, on the other side of the river, seeing this, re-formed their ranks, and as night approached made an attack upon the town, met with but the feeble resistance of intoxicated men, and the town, which a few hours before was won with such desperate valour, was now lost to Ireland through intemperance. What man can say how many losses Ireland has sustained from that day to this from the same cause?

All that was left of the Irish troops, broken and disheartened, now withdrew along the road towards Wexford, and encamped within a few miles of that town; and the now victorious and sober English, more inhuman than the Irish

when intoxicated, butchered their prisoners in cold blood, and perpetrated severities and cruelties of every kind upon the unfortunate inhabitants of New Ross. They pillaged and burnt the town, and no life was spared except those of men who wore the British uniform.

The battle of New Ross has afforded a theme for many a historic anecdote. In the pages of its history we read many a touching, pathetic, and romantic incident; but most of the stories of New Ross live in the minds and hearts of the descendants of the men who fell. Two or three occur to my mind. It is told of a youthful leader of the Irish army, who bore the name that I bear, that seeing the troops disheartened at the arrival of some English artillery, and fearing that unless a noble example of courage were given them they would break and flee, rushed up to the mouth of a cannon, and placing his hand on it exclaimed, "Come on, boys, they are harmless." They came; and just as they were charging towards the gun on which his hand rested, it exploded, and he was blown to pieces. It is said that when the news was brought to the old father of the son's death, he said:—

"Well, I can spare the life of one son, because I have four more fighting in the ranks of the Irish army."

I read a touching incident the other day, and I will read it for you now. It says:—

"In this division were two young men remarkable for their early attachment and continued friendship. They were amongst the first to take up arms, and from that moment had never separated. They fought side by side, cheering, defending, and encouraging each other, as if the success of the field solely depended on their exertions. One had an only sister; she was the pride of a widowed mother, the loved and admired of their village, where to this hour the perfection of her beauty is described. She had seen her brother and his friend march to the field: she had bidden the one adieu with the fond

affection of a sister, but a feeling more tender watched for the safety of the other. Every hour's absence rendered separation more painful; every moment created additional suspense. She resolved to follow her brother—her lover—to the field. The fatal morn when she reached the camp the troops of the Union were in motion. She joined the embattled ranks. The enthusiasm of love supported her through the perils of the fight, but borne down in the retreat, she fell in the indiscriminate slaughter, while her brother and her lover perished by her side."

And there is, perhaps, a more pathetic story than any of them, which I recently came across, but which I have never seen in any history of the rebellion in Wexford, or any account of these events. I myself know the spot well. It is a place called Killane. There is there a ruined house, clothed with a mantle of green ivy, and round it hangs the story that I will tell you.

At the commencement of the struggle there lived there an old farmer, his son, and his daughter. They had been a thrifty, industrious family, and had succeeded in laying up a little store of money, so that the children, when the old man died, if they chose, would have been practically independent of agricultural pursuits. At the commencement of the struggle the old man died, and shortly afterwards a body of yeomanry surrounded the house and dragged away the son. He was followed by his sister, a girl whose beauty was the theme of every tongue, and braving the dangers which beauty was sure to meet with in the ranks of the dissolute soldiery of England, she followed him from place to place, until he was brought at last to a drum head court-martial, for the sole offence of being suspected of sympathising with the cause of his country. He was condemned to instant death, and the nearest tree was to become his gibbet. In an agony of despair, the young girl flung herself at the feet of the commanding officer, and begged him to

spare her brother's life. But he was inexorable, although somewhat touched by her beauty and her grief, and by way of concession he said :—

“I cannot spare his life, but I will not allow his body to be mutilated.”

It was the custom then when a body was hanged to disembowel and disfigure it. He promised that this would not be done in the case of this young man, and said also that he would give the body to her so that it might be decently interred.

And, with a fortitude which touched even the hard hearts of those who surrounded her, this girl stood tearless by the tree on which her brother was hanged before her eyes. The body was given to her, and the next day was buried in the neighbouring churchyard, and the girl returned to her home. From that day a change came over her life, and mind, and character. She banished everyone and gave up the farm, retaining only the house. She discharged the servants, and retained only an old woman who had nursed her, and had known her father and grandfather, and, what astonished everybody, the young man to whom she had been about to give her hand, with her heart in it, was repulsed from that day. She turned cold looks upon him, and he wondered long what change had come over the beautiful Kathleen. She lived the life of a hermit, and never spoke to a soul except the old retainer. Years passed over, the rebellion was suppressed, and one day the mystery was solved. The priest and the doctor were sent for to the cabin, and instead of finding that they were called in to give their ministrations to the girl or her old retainer, they found that they were called to the death-bed of the brother who as everybody supposed had been hanged and buried.

The truth was the body the girl had brought home she could not believe was a corpse, and she chafed the cold hands and kissed the inanimate lips, and with a wild cry she awoke to the consciousness that her brother lived, but with that consciousness came another of a horrible character—the consciousness that, if it were known he was alive, he would be torn from her again and executed; and still another consciousness, more horrible still, that the brother who had come back to life was a brother whose mind was gone. From that day she sacrificed her young life to her demented and deformed brother. For his sake she repulsed the man who had won her heart; for his sake she shut herself out from the world and sacrificed her young life to attend by his bedside, until the Lord, in His mercy, called him away; and she did not tarry long after him, for the neighbours next heard that poor Kathleen was about to be brought out to lie with her forefathers in the country churchyard.

These are the kind of memories that live in my native county. These are the memories that make the men of Wexford the most determined to stand by the cause for which their fathers suffered and died.

I am afraid I have digressed somewhat. I will now take up my narrative again.

From the day of the battle of New Ross the fortunes of the Irish party seemed to change—success deserted them. It would be wearisome for me to sketch all the details of the remainder of the struggle. The last important engagement was the attack of the British troops upon historic Vinegar Hill. For many weeks before the Government had been drafting recruits from every side into Wexford, until at last the English commander had at his disposal an army of over 20,000 men to make the attack. The Irish

on Vinegar Hill were surrounded with artillery. Of the marvellous and dogged courage which they then displayed it is unnecessary for me to speak. For hours they literally fought more like demons than men, and all historians agree in saying that the carnage was frightful. At last, to superior numbers, and arms, and generals, the Irish succumbed, and all that was left of the Irish army of Vinegar Hill retreated, shattered and broken, back to Wexford, where they joined the remnant of the New Ross battalion, and encamped upon the Three Rock Mountain.

Before I leave this Vinegar Hill, I may be allowed to say that there are more memories surrounding it than any other spot, perhaps, in Ireland. There is no Wexford man all over the world whose heart will not beat quicker at the sound of its name.

There is on the top of this hill a rock through which there runs a red vein which many believe to be the mark of blood of our forefathers shed in '98.

Vinegar Hill is a place of pilgrimage, and no Wexford man passes it without raising his hat.

I have seen the venerable patriot, John Martin, bare his aged head and bow his knee on the top of Vinegar Hill, and kiss the sod sanctified by the blood of so many Irishman; and it is a little incident showing how the memory of Vinegar Hill is cherished by Wexford men that in Sydney in 1883 I was presented by some Wexford men with a ring in which was set a piece of stone from the top of Vinegar Hill, brought to Australia as their most precious relic from the old land.

From the defeat of Vinegar Hill the struggle may be said to have been over. Enniscorthy and Wexford soon fell into the hands of the English, and the Irish army, shattered and disheartened, retreated, fighting its way as best it

could, its ranks growing thinner and thinner, through Wicklow, Carlow, and Kildare, till at last the survivors died fighting with something of their old courage on the banks of the Boyne.

Then executions and tortures recommenced in Wexford. Fitzgerald, Colclough, and Harvey, Father Roche, Father Murphy, and all the leaders of the movement were hanged, and quiet—the quiet of death—being restored, Lord Castle-reagh, who, on his own confession, had deliberately planned the entire tragedy, now saw the passage clear for the legislative union.

Of the heroism of the men of Wexford during this struggle no man who has read the records can have any doubt. There is, however, a charge of cruelty and outrage made by nearly every English historian against the people. This rests solely on two events; the massacre at Scullabogue barn, where forty or fifty English prisoners were put to death; and the Wexford bridge massacre—but these atrocities were committed by camp followers of the Irish army. We have it on the authority of English historians that, provoked and suffering as they were, the Irish committed no outrages but these two.

The massacre at Scullabogue was the deed of a number of run-aways from the battle of Ross, who brought tidings—which were perfectly true, that the victorious English troops were putting all the rebel prisoners to the sword; and in a spirit of savage retaliation the English prisoners at Scullabogue were similarly treated. The Irish leaders were in no sense responsible, and General Harvey immediately resigned his command in a great degree in consequence of this deed.

No one desires to palliate acts of cruelty, but in common justice to the Irish it should be remembered that for these isolated cases I have mentioned, there were scores of far

greater atrocity perpetrated by the English troops with the full consent of their commanders. The massacre on the Gibbet Rath in Kildare, where three hundred and fifty rebels having surrendered their arms on promise of quarter, were slaughtered by the troops, and the burning of the hospital at Enniscorthy, where one hundred wounded rebels were burned to death, far exceed in atrocity the massacre at Scullabogue.

This proclamation, issued from headquarters, by General Harvey, shows that the Irish army was not responsible :—

“Any person or persons who shall take upon them to kill or murder any person or prisoner, burn any house, or commit any plunder, without special written orders from the Commander-in-Chief, shall suffer death.—By order of

“B. B. HARVEY, Commander-in-Chief.

“F. BREEN, Adjutant-General.

“Head-quarters, Carrick-Byrne Camp, 6th June, 1798.”

Here is another :—

“At this eventful period all Europe must admire, and posterity will read with astonishment the heroic acts achieved by a people strangers to military tactics, and having few professional commanders. But what power can resist men fighting for liberty!

“In the moment of triumph, my countrymen, let not your victories be tarnished with any wanton act of cruelty. Many of those unfortunate men now in prison were not our enemies from principle; most of them compelled by necessity, were obliged to oppose you. . . .

“To promote union of brotherhood and affection among our countrymen of all religious persuasions has been our principle object. We have sworn in the most solemn manner—we have associated for this laudable purpose, and no power on earth shall shake our resolution.

“EDWARD ROCHE.

“Wexford, 7th June, 1798.”

These are the general orders of the Generals of the Irish army. In all the pages of histories on this subject there is not one single general order from the British commander to

his troops to treat the Irish with humanity. Outrages, no doubt, occurred on the popular side ; but we have complete proof that they were not committed with the sanction or connivance of the leaders of the army—but, as I said, by the camp-followers.

Thus ended the war in Wexford county. It is estimated that twenty thousand of the people of Wexford perished in the encounter, and that ten thousand of the English troops perished also. It took as many men to vanquish the brave but undisciplined men who formed the Irish army, as Wellington had at his disposal at Waterloo.

I have now finished. I feel sure I have dealt with the subject in an inadequate fashion. Yet I hope what I have said will do something to vindicate the memory of the men of '98 from the calumnies it is but too fashionable to heap upon them even to-day. Almost one hundred years have passed since those men lived, and suffered, and died. The last survivor of the rising has been gathered to his fathers.

“ Their bones are dust,
Their good swords rust,
Their souls are with the saints, we trust.”

Looking back after the lapse of years on their struggles and death, what lesson does their history teach to their descendants? I may be told it is a history of failure. It is true that in the vulgar acceptance of the word they failed. They rose to shake off an intolerable and inhuman oppression, and, failing, they paid the penalty of their lives ; but it has been well sung—

“ They never fail who die in a great cause.”

And the defeated rebels of '98 have bequeathed to their

descendants, in lessons of unanimity, patriotism, and self-sacrifice, a priceless heritage.

Next year the Irish race will celebrate the Centenary of the so-called failure of '98. In the United States of America there stand to-day two monuments erected to failures which no man can gaze upon without emotion. One is the monument on Bunker's Hill, erected to commemorate the first battle of the Revolution, though that battle ended in failure and defeat of the American troops. The other is a monument in the far south—a noble shaft erected by the women of the Southern States, and bearing the inscription: "To the lost cause."

The spirit which inspired these monuments—honour for heroism, and gratitude for self-sacrifice—will inspire the Irish people when next year they celebrate the Centenary of '98; but our memorial will be erected not to "The lost cause," but to "The cause that can never die."

Some of the rights which our forefathers struggled to obtain have since their day been achieved. Let us never forget others remain to be won. Ireland's right to nationhood, her right to separate and distinct national existence and to national liberty has yet to be won.

Those in whose veins flows the blood of the men of '98 can never abandon the cause for which they died. The triumph of that cause may not come in our day—but we believe that triumph to be inevitable as firmly as we believe in the existence of God. It is surely safe to prophecy that when through the clouds and darkness of the long and weary night the dawn of liberty at last bursts on this land, the Irish people in the midst of their triumph and jubilation will "absent them from felicity awhile," and kneeling at the nameless graves of their martyrs—graves that mark every foot of the road to freedom—will acknowledge with tears

of gratitude and of pride that from their sufferings and their heroism was drawn the inspiration which rendered immortal and invincible the cause of Ireland's nationality.

“ Then here's their memory may it be
To us a guiding light,
To cheer our strife for liberty,
And teach us to unite.
Through good and ill be Ireland's still,
Tho' sad as their's your fate,
And true men, be you men,
Like those of '98!”

HOME RULE—ITS REAL MEANING.

LECTURE DELIVERED IN MELBOURNE, JULY, 1883.

HON. FRANCIS LONGMORE IN THE CHAIR.

VIII.

I FEEL that I would be wanting in gratitude if I did not commence my remarks by telling you how much I have been touched by the spontaneous enthusiasm with which you have received me here to-night. For that I thank you, and if, to-night, in handling my subject it becomes necessary for me to deal with details which may seem tiresome to very many of you, I have to ask your patience, because it is of the utmost importance that the case of Ireland for Home Rule should be stated calmly, dispassionately, and logically.

You are probably aware that I purpose delivering three addresses in this hall, the first two dealing with an explanation of the aims and objects of the Irish National League, and the third devoted to a refutation of the accusations made against the late Land League and the present leaders of the Irish people.

There are some of my friends who think that it would be well if I had opened my work in Victoria by taking the last subject first; but having thought the matter over, I determined that I would refuse to allow myself to be driven to enter upon a defence the moment I first spoke in this Colony.

My primary object in coming here has been to explain the aims and objects of the organisation by which the Irish people are working to-day ; having fulfilled that duty I am ready, as I think I am able, to meet every accusation against the late Land League, the present League, or the integrity of the leaders of the people.

I have two things to ask.

First I ask the public to deal with those matters, which are distinct matters, upon their merits ; to judge of Home Rule upon its merits ; to deal with the Land Question upon its merits, and then to consider the responsibility or otherwise of the late League for the outrages, also upon its merits, but not before they have heard the defence of the one man who professes to speak as the direct mouthpiece of that organisation.

Secondly, I have to ask the Press to report every word I say, or not to report me at all.

Many accusations have been made against us, but I shall now only allude to one, and that is of a personal character. It seems that some enterprising gentlemen in this colony have discovered that I have modified my tone. Now I can quite understand that accusation. I can quite understand that men who find it necessary to modify their tone seize the excuse that I have modified mine. I challenge any man to quote from any speech made by me in Australia, or in the House of Commons, or on the hill-side in Ireland, and to show where and when and how I have modified either my demands or my tone. I have been moderate ; but I have been moderate because I am a moderate man, holding moderate principles, and the representative in this land of a body of politicians who are moderate politicians.

The subject I have chosen for consideration to-night is one which ought to prove of general interest. It has its

attractions, not only for those who, like myself, hope to see Ireland transformed into a self-governed nation, but also for those who, without sympathising with what they understand by Home Rule, are anxious that the present condition of poverty and discontent may be changed, and are willing to consider, in the calm light of history and philosophy, any scheme for that end which may be proposed by responsible politicians. The question of Irish self-government is the one, above all others, which offers most temptations to an Irish speaker to rely upon appeals to the passion and imagination of an Irish audience. This evening, however, I promise to make no such appeals. I will endeavour to speak dispassionately and impartially, to look upon this question from every point of view, and, weighing the arguments for and against the scheme, to see whether, after all, our demand has not a solid foundation in theoretic reasonableness, in practical advantage, as well as in justice. Without further preface, let me get into my subject.

What do I mean by Home Rule? I mean by Home Rule the restoration to Ireland of representative government, and I define representative government to mean government in accordance with the constitutionally expressed will of a majority of the people, and carried out by a ministry constitutionally responsible to those whom they govern. In other words, I mean that the internal affairs of Ireland shall be regulated by an Irish Parliament—that all Imperial affairs, and all that relates to the Colonies, foreign States, and common interests of the Empire, shall continue to be regulated by the Imperial Parliament as at present constituted. The idea at the bottom of this proposal is the desirability of finding some middle course between separation on the one hand, and over-centralisation of government on the other. Those who propose this scheme consider that

it is undesirable that two countries so closely connected geographically and socially, and having so many commercial and international ties, should be wholly separated, or that any dismemberment of the Empire, which Ireland has had her share in building up, should take place. But they are just as strongly of opinion that it is equally undesirable that one country should control the domestic affairs of another whose wants and aspirations it confessedly does not understand, whose various needs it admittedly has not time to attend to, and whose national life such a system of government tends to destroy. They propose a middle course. They say to England :—

“Retain every guarantee for the unity and strength of the Empire, but give up a task which you have proved yourself incompetent to fulfil satisfactorily. Subdivide the labours of an over-burdened Parliament, and relegate to Irishmen the management of purely Irish affairs, which they alone can thoroughly understand. Let us join for every Imperial purpose, and defend the Empire, which is the heritage of both of us, but let each give up, once and for all, the attempt to rule the domestic affairs of each other. Let us have national freedom and Imperial unity and strength.”

This is the meaning of the present demand of the Irish people for Home Rule. But you may say :—

“This is but a very cursory definition of a general principle ; what of details ?”

Well, as soon as the principle is conceded, the details for carrying that principle into effect may, I think, safely be left to the collective wisdom of Englishmen, Irishmen, and Scotchmen in the Imperial Parliament. It is irregular and confusing to discuss details until we have decided upon principles. But it is perhaps not unreasonable to ask for some suggestions. Mr. Isaac Butt, who was its first pro-

poser, has left upon record a sketch of its details. These, of course, are only put forward as the individual suggestions of that gentleman, and not as essential portions of the proposal. Mr. Butt says :—

“As to the Crown, it is not proposed to affect its prerogatives at all. The only change would be that, in exclusively Irish matters, it would be guided by the advice of an Irish Parliament and an Irish Ministry. In all other affairs it would continue, as at present, to be guided by the advice of the Imperial Legislature. As to the Imperial Parliament, it would continue to have precisely the same supreme powers that it now possesses over all Imperial affairs—just as completely as if no Irish Parliament existed. Its jurisdiction would include every international transaction, all relations with foreign States, all questions of peace and war, the government of the Colonies, the army, navy, and all that relates to the defence and stability of the Empire ; control of the Imperial Customs and general trade regulations ; control of expenditure and supplies for all Imperial purposes ; power to levy general taxation for such purposes ; charge of the public debt and the Imperial Civil List ; and sovereign power within the limits of its attributions over individual citizens of both countries. But it should be settled beforehand in what proportion Ireland should contribute to such expenditure—with what share of the public debt she is fairly chargeable ; what part of the Imperial Civil List she should pay ; and taxation should be adjusted, not only as to amount, but as to mode, in such a manner that its burden would be equitably distributed throughout every part of the United Kingdom. Of course Ireland would continue to be represented in the Imperial Parliament on Imperial questions, but on these only. For all Imperial purposes the two countries would continue to be a ‘United Kingdom,’ and to constitute in the face of other nations one Imperial State. As to the Irish Parliament, it would have supreme control over the internal affairs of Ireland, just as if no Imperial Parliament existed. Its jurisdiction would include every exclusively Irish interest : education, agriculture, commerce, manufactures, public works, courts of justice, magistracy, public railways, post-office, corporations, grand juries, and every other detail of Irish business and Irish National life. . . . It would be composed of the Sovereign, Lords and Commons of Ireland. The sovereignty of both kingdoms would continue and would be declared to be indissolubly united. . . . In respect of all exclusively Irish interests the Irish Parliament, so constituted, would rank, act and rule as the Parliament of an independent nation.”

But lest some people might say that I am quoting Mr. Butt and not the present leaders of the movement for Home Rule, who are supposed in this country to be more advanced than Mr. Butt was, I will read a conversation which took place at an interview between a Parisian journalist and Mr. Parnell:—

“M. Cornely—So far we have dismissed the disease. What about the remedy?”

“Mr. Parnell—There is but one—Home Rule autonomy. We wish to enjoy the rights belonging to us as other subjects of the United Kingdom. We are tired of the position of pariah. In my soul and conscience I believe we shall win, and within a reasonable time.

“M. Cornely—I wish you may. But what do you want exactly?”

“Mr. Parnell—A Parliament of our own—a Government of our own, with a natural result—liberty. You will better understand me when I say that we should be assimilated to a state of things that exists in Canada or the Isle of Man.

“M. Cornely—And what control would the English have?”

“Mr. Parnell—We would not cease to be subjects of the United Kingdom. The Queen would be our Queen. She would be the link that would attach Ireland to Great Britain. We would consent even to be governed by a Viceroy, provided there were no exceptional laws, and that the Viceroy had no more rights, no arbitrary powers over us, than Queen Victoria has over her English or Scotch subjects. *Political peace will never be obtained until the day when we are treated as a nation, or at least as a free colony, and when we shall have an Irish Parliament. The day when Ireland shall become like Canada or the Isle of Man, as I have told you, the day when the Viceroy, if Viceroy there shall be, shall have over Ireland no more rights than the Queen, of whom he is delegate, has over England.*”

Now that is what the Irish people mean by Home Rule, both in principle and detail. The first thing I have a right to claim is that this proposal is not either vague or unintelligible. It is clear, precise, and abundant in detail. Secondly, I have a right to say it is not a proposal for separation. One of its essential conditions is the preservation of the unity of the Empire. The scheme is totally inconsistent

with separation. A federal union and separation are entirely distinct things, and if I am to argue this matter reasonably, my opponents must recognise and acknowledge the distinction. Thirdly, I have a right to say that it is not communistic or revolutionary. It aims simply at a prevention of over-centralisation, and it violates not one principle of the Constitution. I will now proceed to consider whether I am entitled to say that our proposal is a reasonable one theoretically.

Let us see, first, whether it is a proposal judged by the test of common sense which would seem a reasonable one to suggest as a remedy for the present deplorable condition of things in Ireland. Let us see, then, whether it bears the recommendation of political philosophy ; and, lastly, whether it has the sanction of successful working in other nations at other periods in the world's history, and in the British Empire itself. What are the facts as presented by the political situation of to-day ? Here we have two countries closely connected geographically and socially, but distinct in historic tradition, in religion, in national instinct and national natures. Speaking the one language, belonging to the one Empire, composed to some extent of an admixture of the same races, yet presenting to the world national characteristics as essentially distinct as any two nations in the universe. Historically, Ireland is the elder. She can boast of having been a civilised and famous nation when England was a barbarous province of the Roman Empire. But long ages since England reversed the balance. She has been rich, prosperous and free, while Ireland was poor, miserable, and subject. For seven centuries England has more or less successfully asserted her sway, but Ireland, 'mid unparalleled suffering, has struggled, age after age, for the preservation of her nationality and her freedom. For over 600 years

Ireland had her own Parliament upon Irish soil, subject, it is true, more or less at different times to England, but still all this time a distinct legislature.

In 1782 Henry Grattan, backed by the Irish Volunteers, declared that no power on earth had the right to legislate for the Irish people save the Sovereign, Lords, and Commons of Ireland, and he enunciated the memorable doctrine

“They knew their duty to their sovereign, and they were loyal; they knew their duty to themselves, and were determined to be free.”

In that happy moment England yielded, and for the short span of eighteen glorious years Ireland, under an absolutely free and independent Parliament, prospered and advanced with enormous strides in power and in prosperity. But, history tells us how a conspiracy was entered into to rob Ireland of her rights. The means whereby the Union was carried have received the scathing denunciations of all historians of all nationalities and all shades of religious opinion and political thought. A great Irishman, one of the present leaders of the National movement, has said that what is morally wrong can never be politically right, and the scheme of Pitt and Castlereagh, carried as it was by bribery and corruption, by violence and murder, stands to-day upon the page of history as the hughest political crime and blunder of the century. From that moment down to the present day Ireland has been ruled by Englishmen and Scotchmen, and it requires no words of mine to prove the utter failure of the system—a system which in eighty-three years has necessitated the enactment of no less than fifty-two Coercion Acts—a system which in eighty-three years has been marked by half-a-dozen famines, by four unsuccessful rebellions, and which necessitates to-day a standing army in Ireland

absolutely larger than England had in the Crimea when she was fighting Russia.

One of the acutest political thinkers of the day, Mr. Lecky, has said that :—

“Pitt’s scheme centralised but did not unite, or rather united the the legislatures, but divided the nations.”

True, Ireland sends a certain number of Members to the House of Commons, but they are invariably defeated on purely Irish matters by Englishmen and Scotchmen, and in every detail of her political life Ireland is ruled by Englishmen and Scotchmen. At first she was ruled brutally, but I am one of those who are not only willing but proud and glad to be able to admit that there is in England a number, and a rapidly increasing number, of Englishmen who are willing to do justice to Ireland. But they neither have time to attend to her wants nor knowledge to understand them.

The Imperial Parliament at the present moment is overburdened with work of every description. Day by day the pressure is becoming more extreme, and all thoughtful men now say that reform is absolutely necessary. The effect of all this upon Ireland has been most disastrous. She has been depopulated and pauperised ; her industries have perished ; her men of wealth and genius have left her shores. Her people, deprived of all sense of responsibility, have too often been left a prey to men of desperate designs. All, all seems gone, save one thing, that has lived through it all, and that is Ireland’s undying faith in the ultimate triumph of her nationality.

This is the state of things ! These are the facts of the political situation which, for everybody’s sake, we ask Englishmen honestly to face to-day. Surely common sense would re-

commend as a remedy the very scheme which we propose. Surely common sense would say :—

“Lighten the work of the already over-burdened Parliament—relieve it of a task which it has proved itself incompetent to fulfil—relegate to Irishmen the management of Irish affairs, which they alone can thoroughly understand.”

Common sense, I know, counts for a great deal in this world, but standing alone, it is very often disregarded.

I now ask, is our proposal reasonable, judged by the test of political philosophy? It is not necessary for me to tell you that the federal system which we propose is not a new-fangled plan, invented for the occasion, but one that has existed from the very earliest times. At all times in the world's history there have been found nations so closely connected by circumstances of position or mutual interests as to make it desirable that they should be united in one common state, yet so distinct in national characteristics as to make it not only undesirable but impossible to weld them into one homogeneous nation. To suit this state of things the federal system was invented. Let the distinguished historian, Mr. Freeman, explain to what set of circumstances it applies, and remember he speaks now without any reference so Ireland. That gentleman, in his *History of Federalism*, says :—

“The federal system requires a sufficient degree of community in origin, or feeling, or interest, to allow the members to work together up to a certain point. It requires that there should not be that perfect degree of community, or rather identity, which allows the members to be fused together for all purposes. When there is no community at all federalism is inappropriate—the cities or states had better remain wholly independent. When community rises into identity federalism is equally inappropriate—the cities or states had better both sink into the counties of a kingdom. But in the inter-

mediate set of circumstances . . . federalism is the true solvent. It gives as much union as the members need, and not more than they need."

Now, I contend that the intermediate state of things there described exactly portrays the present relations between England and Ireland, and I consequently contend that I am justified in saying that my proposition is not only reasonable when judged by the test of common sense, but that it is also reasonable when judged by the test of political philosophy.

Now let us see whether it has the sanction of successful working in other nations, and at other periods of the world's history. In truth, the very superabundance of evidence in favour of the federal system constitutes my chief difficulty in dealing with this part of the subject. If I dealt with it fully I would be obliged to relate some of the most glorious chapters in the world's history. All time permits me to do is to give two or three instances from the past and present history of the world.

In ancient times the most remarkable instance of the success of the system was the Achaican League. In the heyday of Grecian power every city was a state and every state was independent. But with the fall of Athens came the necessity for combination to resist the encroachments of Macedonia. Each of these states retained home rule and supreme control over their own affairs, but they united for the common purpose of defence, and history tells us that the federalism then adopted arrested Hellenic decadence for centuries.

The most remarkable instance in mediæval times is furnished by the history of the United Provinces of the Netherlands. Here again was an instance of a number of communities so bound together by mutual interests as to

make it essential that they should be united in a common state, yet so distinct in their traditions and characteristics as to make it impossible for them to be welded into one nation. They united, but each province retained supreme control of its own affairs. They united in one state, with one sovereign and one army, and history tells us that the federalism they then adopted enabled them to hold their country against Spain when Spain was mistress of the world.

Switzerland presents an instance of federalism commenced long ages ago and lasting down to the present day. Their position made it necessary for the cantons of Switzerland to be united ; but their diversity of customs and religion, not half so marked as those between England and Ireland, made it impossible that they should be welded into one nation. Each of the cantons to-day possesses Home Rule, while the general government watches over the prosperity and honour of every one of them.

Of course the most remarkable instance of modern times is supplied by the history of the great republic of America. It is not my duty now to enter into an explanation or defence of the Constitution of America. I may be told that that Constitution has its defects. I have never read of any political constitution that was perfect, but it is a remarkable thing that the so-called defects in the American Constitution all seem to flow from divergencies from the pure principle of federalism ; and, at any rate, the fact remains that in the very short space of a century these federated States have built up a great and free nation. Every State has its own Parliament, has supreme control over its own affairs, while Congress, representing all the States, guards the national honour and national prosperity. Monsieur De Tocqueville says :—

“Every American citizen defends the union, because in defending the Union he knows he is defending the increased prosperity and freedom of his own State.”

In 1814 Norway and Sweden adopted the federal system, and later still, and within the recollection of even the youngest of us here, Austria conceded to the State of Hungary, after a long, bitter and useless struggle, the very same privileges which Ireland now demands from England. But, after all, those examples which come home to our hearts and minds more forcibly than any are those supplied by the British Empire to-day. Here, in each one of these Australian colonies, you possess and you jealously guard the principles of Home Rule. I have asked repeatedly since I came to this country, and I now ask again, for some intelligent reasons why Australians should refuse to concede to Ireland that which they themselves acknowledge is the source and the cause of their own prosperity and their own loyalty. What England granted to Australia she granted to Canada. I hold in my hand a list of places to which England has already conceded the right of self-government which Ireland now demands. The list includes twenty-five different dependencies which are now in possession of Home Rule.

The Bahamas are eighteen small islands containing a population of less than 40,000 persons, and of these about an eight are white. Home Rule exists there. The domestic legislature is elected by the people.

Barbadoes is an island containing a population of 171,889. It has Home Rule, its assembly, elected annually, administers its domestic affairs.

The Bermudas, 12, 000 inhabitants. They enjoy Home Rule.

The Cape of Good Hope, with a population one-fifth that

of Ireland, and only one-fourth European, was granted Home Rule thirty years ago. Natal, an integral part of the Cape settlement was dissatisfied with Cape control, and was allowed autonomy in 1856.

Sierre Leone contained ten years ago one hundred white men and thirty white women, but it enjoys Home Rule.

British Guiana enjoyed Home Rule for nearly a century. Honduras has Home Rule.

Dominica has Home Rule.

St. Vincent is a beautiful oval Island, eleven miles wide and eighteen long. It has Home Rule.

Tobago, in 1834, emancipated its slaves, paying their masters compensation, and blossoms under Home Rule.

Australia was granted legislative independence. Australia West is under Home Rule.

New South Wales has its own domestic government.

New Zealand has boasted Home Rule for more than forty years.

Queensland is governed also by its own legislature.

Tasmania is governed by a legislature elected by the people, Victoria also.

Alderney, eight miles in circumferences is unquestionably possessed of Home Rule.

Guernsey makes its own laws, imposes its own taxes.

The tiny Isle of Man, seventy-five miles in circumference, enjoys Home Rule in the fullest and most effective form.

The Dominion of Canada is technically included in colonial dependencies of Great Britain, and is comparatively the most striking illustration of the fact of Home Rule antagonising the law of disintegration in great empires.

I may be told that in not one of these cases are the circumstances precisely the same as in the case of Ireland. I don't suppose that any two cases in history are precisely

the same in all their features, but I think there is sufficient similarity in the cases I have quoted to warrant my assertion that my proposition is not only reasonable theoretically judged by the test of common sense and of political philosophy, but also because it has the sanction of successful working in other nations, at other times, and in the British Empire itself.

Now having, I think, established my proposition that Home Rule is reasonable theoretically, I will proceed to consider whether it is a proposition that is likely to prove advantageous in practice.

My first proof of this is supplied by the instances I have already quoted of its successful working in other nations, at other times, and in the British Empire to-day. It is for my opponents to prove, if they can, that what has created prosperity and strengthened loyalty in Australia would have a different effect in Ireland. As it is with an individual, so it is with a nation. No one can transact its business as well as itself. Unless a man or a community be mad they must understand their own business better than anyone else. Deprive a man of the right of governing his own affairs himself and what happens? If he submits you turn him into a slave. You kill in him all genius, all talent, all enterprise, all energy, all interest in life. Treat a nation in the same way, and with no sense of responsibility left to them you may make the people reckless. You ruin self-reliance, you kill energy, and enterprise, and industry. No nation so treated has ever prospered; yet this is the position in which they insist upon keeping Ireland to-day. They can't say it is because we are unfitted for self-government, for their own historians say in every page they have ever written on the subject that in the eighteen years of Irish rule Ireland advanced in prosperity, the arts of peace, and

good government, and presented to the gaze of the world and the admiration of posterity a galaxy of great men whose names will live as long as the English tongue. And from that day to this Irishmen have been going through the world providing the best governors and ablest statesmen to the colonies of England.

There are two things that are absolutely essential to the successful fulfilment of its duty by Parliament. The first is time to transact its business, and the second is knowledge to understand it. Now, if there is one thing upon which all men at home are agreed it is this, that the Imperial Parliament has not at its disposal one-half the time necessary to transact all the important business it is supposed to do. Leaving aside all matters of foreign and colonial moment, there are at this time sufficient Irish questions waiting for settlement to occupy the undivided attention of the Imperial Parliament for several years. The same remark applies to English and Scotch affairs. Matters of the most vital consequence to England and Scotland had to be shelved last session, and now this session, Mr. Gladstone has announced, it to be a purely English one, which means that Irish grievances, which he has acknowledged are crying for redress, must again be neglected. The question of the day *par excellence* is how to lighten the labour of the Imperial Parliament, and Mr. Gladstone has admitted that this can only be done by decentralisation, or, as we call it, Home Rule. But, deficient as the Imperial Parliament is in the time at its disposal, it is equally deficient in that intimate knowledge which is necessary for successful Irish legislation. It is a matter about which there can be no cavil that the ordinary English and Scotch member knows little or nothing about Ireland. He has never been there. He has never studied any of our great social or political problems, and is

not bound to the country by any ties, either of birth, parentage, property, or affection. Under these circumstances, is it to be wondered if blunders of the most serious and sometimes most ludicrous character creep into the legislation of the House of Commons? The Viceroy is an Englishman, the Chief Secretary is a Scotchman, and the Under Secretary is an Englishman, and through all the Executive every officer is either a Scotchman or an Englishman. No doubt many of them are men of capacity, but they are devoid of that intimate knowledge which can only be attained by living amongst the people and knowing them, and which is absolutely essential to the successful government of the country.

It is a very significant thing that in every constitutionally governed country in the world there is one essential condition which must be fulfilled before any man can become a Minister of the Crown, and that is that he shall represent the will of the majority of the people and have their confidence. In Ireland there is also an essential condition that must be fulfilled before any man can hold office under the Crown, and that is, that before accepting office he must hold opinions notoriously opposed to those of the people he is going to govern. Under these circumstances can there be any wonder if Irishmen are discontented with the present system of government? Can there be any wonder that Irish wants and aspirations are misunderstood? Can there be any doubt of the enormous practical advantage which would ensue to Ireland from the adoption of the principle of federalism, whereby Irish matters would be ruled wholly by Irishmen, who alone can thoroughly understand them?

Ah! were I to mention all those Irish interests and industries which would be benefited by Home Rule I should name every Irish interest and every Irish industry—the

agricultural interest, the manufacturing interest, the railway interest, the fisheries, all languishing and neglected; the commerce of the country ruined; the general trade paralysed; the education of the country stunted; the national life of the country suppressed. A man whose words should be received with weight in this country has written upon this subject, and I will read a few sentences from what he says. The man I refer to is Sir George Grey. He says:—

“Give to Ireland a State Legislature and a State Executive in Dublin; secure thereby the residence of its ablest men in the country; open a fair field as Ministers, legislators, orators to its best and wisest men; afford from the same source, as would necessarily and certainly be done, occupation to Irish architects, sculptors, painters; and secure a resident aristocracy of worth, talent, and wisdom; and you will, at the same time, restore the wealth, trade, and commerce of Dublin and Ireland. Dumb Ireland will then speak again. Half inanimate Ireland will again awaken to national life and breathe the breath of hope and freedom. Whilst, by again accustoming the Irish people to the management of their own affairs, and to the administrative duties of the highest order, a willing people will be educated in that political knowledge which will enable them to put an end to the ills which afflict them, ‘the cause and cure of which none can understand so well as themselves.’”

So much then, for the practical advantages that would result from Home Rule to Ireland; but I may be asked what practical advantages would ensue to England and the Empire. What practical advantage to England? Will it not be the means of relieving the over-burthened Imperial Parliament, and of converting Ireland from what she undoubtedly is to-day, the weak spot in the armour of the Empire, into a prosperous and contented portion of it?

Grattan once warned Pitt that he was pulling down one of the pillars of the Empire in passing the Union. I know not if Irish loyalty may be considered a pillar of the

Empire, but this I do know, if the Union did not destroy Irish loyalty it tended to weaken it. I am very loath, indeed, to weary the patience of those who have listened to me so attentively up to the present, but I want, if I can, to make my case complete. I hold here an extract from Mr. Lecky, whose name requires no introduction to any man of political or historical thought and research. He says :—

“It appears to me perfectly evident that no Government will ever command the real affection and loyalty of the people which is not in some degree national, administered in a great measure by Irishmen and through Irish institutions. If the present discontent is ever to be checked, if the ruling power is ever to carry with it the moral weight which is essential to its success, it can only be by calling into being a strong local political feeling, directed by men who have the responsibility of property, who are attached to the Constitution, and who, at the same time, possess the confidence of the Irish people. As in Hungary, as in Poland, as in Belgium, national institutions will alone obtain the confidence of the nation, and any system of policy which fails to recognise this craving of the national sentiment will fail also to strike a chord of true gratitude. It may palliate, but it cannot cure. It may deal with local symptoms, but it cannot remove the chronic disease. To call into active political life the upper class of Irishmen, and to enlarge the sphere of their political work—to give, in a word, to Ireland the greatest amount of self-government that is compatible with the unity and integrity of the Empire—should be the aim of every statesman.”

Now, I have two or three more quotations. I have quoted from eminent jurists, political philosophers and historians, and I now purpose to make two short quotations from statesmen of the present English Government. The first is a speech delivered recently by Mr. Herbert Gladstone, the son of the Prime Minister, and also a member of the present Government. It is as follows :—

“The form of government in Ireland was as bad as it could be. In his opinion it was one of the worst forms of government to be found

in Europe. Centralisation was the curse of the country. The form of government should before long be radically changed, and the people allowed to manage their own affairs. No government could claim to exist on Constitutional principles which did not rest on the will and support of the people. The Irish Government rested on the Scotch and English majority in the British Parliament. How far ought we to go in the way of concession to Irish demands for political freedom? Every man could see that in certain cases the granting of full political freedom would lead to risks and dangers which no government could rightly make. The converse of this was equally true. Equal laws every Liberal at once conceded to them. The mere mention, however, of an Irish Parliament, of Home Rule, aroused wild cries of 'Disintegration of the Empire.' Yet, as we had given a Parliament to all our great colonies with the most beneficial results, and as we lost America through withholding elementary political institutions, in the abstract there were strong reasons for its adoption. But it was said that by granting Home Rule they would play into the hands of the Separationists, and that the Irish were hopelessly disloyal. He did not grant the latter; but assuming it to be so, he did not think a Parliament in Dublin would endanger the Queen's authority in Ireland."

My next quotation is from a speech recently delivered at Ashton by Mr. Chamberlain, also a member of the British Government and the Cabinet :—

"Do not let us deceive ourselves. Do not let us suppose that our work is yet complete. As long as Ireland is without any institutions of local government worthy of the name—as long as nothing is done to cultivate the sense of responsibility among the people—as long as the large proportion of the population are shut out from any part in the management of their own affairs, while the education of the people is stunted, their prejudices ignored—so long the seeds of discontent and disloyalty will remain, only to burst forth into luxuriant growth at the first favourable season."

There are two objections to Home Rule which I would wish to deal with, because they confront us on every hand.

The first is that, if Home Rule just in itself were granted, we would then demand total separation the day after. Now, granting Home Rule itself to be just, is that a valid argu-

ment? There are many people who believe that to-day the Irish people would separate from England entirely if they could. No doubt that is true of many of them. What prevents them? No doubt those objectors would reply: "England's power, her army and navy." Well, but England's power—her army and navy—would remain after Home Rule just as before, and the Imperial Government would remain just as potent after Home Rule as it is to-day to prevent separation.

The second familiar objection may be summed up in the word "Scotland." Scotland is contented with the Union, say the objectors, and Scotland is prosperous. True, but what then? Does that prove that self-government is wrong? I believe, in principle, Scotland is entitled to Home Rule; and I am very sure that if the majority of the Scotch people demanded it as we do, it would be granted. They do not demand it; but does that prove it is wrong? If in the history of the world you find one country which has prospered under the rule of another, and one only, does that prove self-government is wrong, or rather does it not become the exception which proves the rule that no country can be prosperous and contented unless she is mistress of her own destinies. Scotland has prospered not because of, but in spite of, the Union. She has had many advantages denied to Ireland. Virtually, she has been ruled by Scotchmen. I have never seen a Scotch Bill, receiving the support of the majority of the Scotch Members, that was not willingly passed into law by the Imperial Parliament with as little hesitation as Irish Bills, supported by a majority of the Irish Members, were invariably rejected. The Government officials in Scotland are Scotchmen, while those in Ireland are not Irishmen; and in addition to all this, I am perfectly convinced that the day is not far distant when Scotchmen

will demand and get the privileges and rights which we are demanding for Ireland.

I have now finished. I think I have explained what we want under the name of Home Rule. I have endeavoured to prove that Home Rule is reasonable theoretically, judged by the test of common sense, political philosophy, and history, and that it is likely to prove advantageous in practice to Ireland, England, and the Empire; I have quoted my authorities, and have combated some of the most popular objections to the scheme. I trust I have fulfilled my word not to make any appeal either to the passions or the imagination of my audience, and I hope I have not done so at the cost of being dull or uninteresting. I have discussed matters calmly and dispassionately, with a due sense of the responsibilities of my position as the representative of a nation, and remembering that I am surrounded by men who are only too anxious to seize upon my words and twist them so as to render them injurious to me and to my cause. I have dealt with my subject impartially and fairly. All that I can say in conclusion is this: I shall be amply repaid if the few words which I have said on this question to-night should prove the means of making intelligent men in this land calmly consider the question. It is a question which must come up for settlement sooner or later. Upon its speedy and peaceful settlement between the two countries, I believe in my heart and conscience, depends the future welfare not only of Ireland but of the Empire. Without some such settlement I see no hope for the permanent prosperity and pacification of my country. Ireland's malady is one which must be cured by Ireland herself. The vital force which has lived through seven centuries of oppression still animates our race. The simple faith, the kindly nature, the indomitable courage which made Ireland the centre of

civilisation in the far-off ages of the past are not yet extinct. Give them free scope. Give them the bracing influence of a free constitution, and before a generation has passed away the long and dreary ages of bitterness, and strife, and hatred will be forgotten, and Ireland, the Ireland of our hopes and tears and prayers, will have entered upon a new era of liberty, prosperity, and peace.

THE HOME RULE BILL, 1886.

SPEECH ON SECOND READING IN HOUSE OF COMMONS,

APRIL, 1886.

IX.

MR. SPEAKER.—The House cannot have failed to notice the difference between the arguments advanced by the hon. and learned gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. E. Clarke, Q.C.) and those which were urged by the right hon. member for Bury (Sir H. James). The right hon. member for Bury argued that the Bill was so far-reaching that it would be dangerous to pass it, and his argument was based on profound distrust of the Irish people. The hon. and learned member for Plymouth, on the contrary, contended that the Bill provides so flimsy and worthless a scheme that if the Irish people had any self-respect they would not accept it. Perhaps the Irish people might be allowed to judge for themselves, and to speak for themselves in this matter. I trust the House will accept with readiness the statement of the representatives of the Irish people that, on the whole, they are satisfied with this Bill, and that, so far as their judgment goes, it provides a settlement of the question. No one could have failed to note the bent given to the discussion now and on the first reading by the enemies of this Bill. They have exhaustively criticised its details, but have said nothing about

its vital principle. I prefer to take a course more suitable to the present stage and to argue on the general principle of the measure. What is its essential principle? No dissent was expressed when the right hon. gentleman, who has spoken from the Government bench (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), described that principle as the establishment of a Parliament in Ireland with certain well-defined powers for the legislative and administrative control of Irish affairs. Arguing the subject from the standpoint of an Irishman and a Nationalist, the first thing I ask the House to consider is whether that principle is one which Ireland has a right to have conceded to her. I am aware this argument of right may not appeal with much force to some classes of English members, but it will appeal with force to the English masses, who are a justice-loving people, and also, I hope, to their representatives in this House. Grattan, who, in addition to being an ardent Irish Nationalist, was also a devoted adherent of the Imperial greatness of England, argued thus upon this topic of right:—

“Before Ireland goes into her title, let us hear the title of England, for it is not a question whether Ireland has a right to be free, but whether Great Britain has a right to enslave her. When the latter country asks what right have the Irish to make laws for themselves, Ireland will not answer, but demands what right has England to make laws for Ireland. From nature she has none. Nature has not given one nation a right over another. She has not that right from covenant. Let her show the covenant; in what history is it recorded?”

Those who now argued against this Bill point to the Act of Union as a covenant. The answer of the Irish representatives to that argument is to point to the character of the Act of Union, and above all to the means by which it was passed. If the Act of Union is to be held to be a bar to Ireland's right to self-government then those who so hold

must regard that Act as a Treaty freely accepted by both nations. Those were the grounds on which Mr. Pitt recommended the Act of Union in his great speech on January 31st, 1799, he said it would be a

“Union by free consent on just and equal terms—the free and voluntary association of two great countries, which join for their common benefit in one Empire, where each will retain its proportional weight and importance under the security of equal laws and reciprocal affection.”

And he quoted the lines:—

“Paribus se legibus ambæ Invictæ gentes æterna in fœdera mittant.”

Is that a correct description of what the Act of Union has proved to be? “Equal laws”! Why, the whole history of Ireland since the Act of Union has been one of exceptional legislation. “Voluntary association of two great countries”! Every historian acknowledges there had not been free consent by the Irish people. The Union was carried in opposition to the will of almost the whole nation, as the Premier has said, the entire of the unbribed intellect of Ireland was against it. Mr. Grey (afterwards Lord Grey) spoke on the matter of Ireland’s consent in this House, and he said:—

“There are in the Irish Parliament 300 members; 120 of these strenuously opposed the Union; 162 members voted in favour of the Union, and of these 116 were placemen.”

William Cunningham Plunkett also spoke on this point and his testimony was exactly the same; and while I do not desire to trouble the House by reading a number of quotations to enforce a point which I think nobody can deny—not even the hon. and learned gentleman who has last spoken—I

will read for the benefit of some of his new friends of the Loyal and Patriotic Union, a few words by Mr. Lecky. In Vol. II. of his History, Mr. Lecky wrote:—

“The years between 1779 and 1798 were probably the most prosperous in Irish history, and the generation which followed the Union was one of the most miserable. The sacrifice of nationality was extorted by the most enormous corruption in the history of representative institutions. It was demanded by no considerable portion of the Irish people; it was accompanied by no signal political or material benefit that could mitigate or counteract its unpopularity; and it was effected without a dissolution, in opposition to the immense majority of the representatives of the counties and considerable towns and to the innumerable addresses from every part of the country. Whatever may be thought of the abstract merits of the Act of Union as it was carried, it was a crime of the deepest turpitude, which by imposing with every circumstance of infamy a new form of government on a reluctant and protesting nation, has vitiated the whole course of Irish opinion.”

On this question of right the right hon. member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) appears to be divided from the Irish representatives by a wide gulf. Last autumn he made a speech which attracted much attention and gave no little offence in Ireland. He controverted Ireland's right to self-government by the extraordinary statement that five millions of Irishmen in Ireland had no more right to govern themselves than five millions of Englishmen in London. That was regarded by Ireland as a very feeble and very insulting misrepresentation of her case. If he could have shown that London was a country distinct from England, with distinct historic traditions and distinct national characteristics; that London has possessed, as Ireland has, distinct Parliamentary institutions of her own for 600 years; that those Parliamentary institutions had been robbed from London by means such as I have described against the will of the people, and that an overwhelming majority of the

people to-day demand their restoration, then indeed he would have some title to institute a comparison between the cases of London and Ireland. But no such analogy exists. The fault at the bottom of the right hon. gentleman's argument is that he pre-supposes a perfect identity between Ireland and England. Is there any such identity? There is not geographical identity—the countries are divided by sixty miles of water. There is not historical identity—no two nations in Europe have histories more dissimilar. There is not identity of character—it is actually part of the argument of our opponents that there are deep and ineradicable differences of character between the two peoples. There is not identity of condition—England is rich—Ireland is poor. England is a manufacturing country, Ireland is an agricultural one. What identity is there? The identity imparted by the Act of Union!

The only argument in support of this idea of identity must depend upon that Act, and some gentlemen go so far as to say that the Act of Union is a fundamental and unalterable law. Many hon. members will remember Sydney Smith's remark, that "the man who talks about an unalterable law proves himself to be an unalterable fool." Lord Beaconsfield, at any rate, did not come within that sweeping statement, for in a speech made by him in the House in 1868 on the Irish Church Disestablishment Bill, he said:—

"I take no exaggerated view of even the articles of Union. I have not for a moment pretended that the articles of Union between the two nations are irreversible. I have not for a moment pretended that the articles of Union, and the great Acts of Parliament which were passed to carry them into effect, cannot by the consent of the Sovereign and of the estates of the realm be changed or modified."

Shortly after that speech the Act of Union was modified. All the Prime Minister now proposes, and all the Irish representatives ask, is that the process of readjustment which was commenced in 1869 should be carried to its logical conclusion, so that the Government of Ireland should be brought into sympathy with the will of the governed, and into harmony with the ideas and conditions of this period of the nineteenth century. So much on the argument of right. I come now to a lower, but, perhaps, a more potent argument, namely, that of expediency.

Apart altogether from Ireland's inherent right, let me ask, is it not manifestly expedient that this concession should be made? What is the history of England's effort to rule Ireland from Westminster? No Englishman, who loves the fair fame of his country, can contemplate without shame the miserable record of eighty-five years of coercion, disaffection, and ever-increasing poverty. How stands the record? Eighty-five years of English legislation for Ireland has resulted in acts that speak volumes. In evidence of promised contentment, order, and peace, there have been twelve Acts for the suspension of *habeas corpus*; 19 Peace Preservation Acts, whether so-called or otherwise; 19 Acts for limiting and controlling the possession of arms and gunpowder; 17 for the prevention of resistance to the law by means of outrages against persons and property; 26 against unlawful and dangerous societies, combinations, assemblies, and processions; 11 for the suppression of rebellions, insurrections, and disturbances; and 2 for curtailing the freedom of the Press—or a Coercion Act of some sort or other for every year since that in which the Act of Union was passed. In evidence of the anticipated prosperity, there have been 11 Acts for the direct relief, otherwise than by the ordinary poor law, of exceptionally extreme poverty, and consequent distress; 10

for the indirect relief of poverty by means of advancing money for public works; 4 for giving the extremely poor employment at the public expense; 4 for contending with famine fever; 4 for saving from perishing by starvation the thousands of children deserted through the abject poverty of their parents; 3 for the relief and assistance of railway companies otherwise unable to proceed with their works; 4 for the artificial assistance of banks, and for sustaining commercial credit; and 4 for the rescue of encumbered estates from hopeless insolvency—making in all 43 Acts in acknowledgment of the ruin and despair that have haunted all sorts and conditions of men. I listened with surprise to the speech of the hon. and learned gentleman who spoke last (Mr. E. Clarke). He spoke of the Parliament of Grattan having checked the commercial development of Ireland. The hon. and learned member is a high authority, no doubt, but I think even he will himself admit that Lord Clare was quite as high an authority, and he is in direct conflict with him on this point. I will not pursue that further, but will quote a few figures to show how the development of Irish industries has been affected since the Union. I find that in Dublin in the year 1800 there were 90 master woollen manufacturers, employing 4,918 hands; and in the year 1840 the industry was practically dead. There were in 1800 30 master wool-combers in Dublin, employing 230 hands; while in 1834 the industry was practically dead. There were 13 carpet manufacturers in Dublin in 1800, employing 230 hands, and in 1841 there were none. In the town of Kilkenny there were to be found in 1800 56 blanket manufacturers, employing 3,000 hands; and in the year 1822 the industry was dead. Then, again, I find that in Dublin, in the year 1800 there were 2,500 silk loom weavers at work, and in 1840 the industry was gone. In the year 1799 there were 2,500

calico looms at work in Balbriggan ; in 1841 there were but 228. In Wicklow in 1800, there were 1,000 hand looms at work ; in 1841 there were none. In the city of Cork there were at work in the year 1800 the following industries, which had since declined :—1,000 braid weavers, of whom only 49 remained in 1834 ; 2,000 worsted weavers, of whom only 90 remained in 1834 ; 3,000 hosiers, of whom only 28 remained in 1834. There were also 700 wool combers, 2,000 cotton weavers, and 600 linen check weavers, each of which industries was dead in 1834. You have, therefore, the fact that all these industries which had been in existence at the time of the Union have either totally disappeared or have been partially destroyed before the year 1841. Now, I ask the House, do they seriously believe that it has been to the advantage of England or of the Empire that all these industries in Ireland have died out, and that the entire population has been compelled to fall back upon agriculture as its only means of living ? The answer is to be found in the agrarian troubles that have occupied so much of the time of Parliament, and baffled all the efforts of your ablest statesmen to cope with or remedy. The right hon. member for West Birmingham has another argument, and it was this—that the Bill will lead to separation. He said that the Bill would change Ireland into a “ foreign and hostile country,” and the hon. member for Bury followed with the same argument. It would be well for them, however, to consider whether they could make Ireland more “ foreign ” and “ hostile ” than it admittedly is at present. But in almost the same breath in which he spoke of this Bill making Ireland a “ foreign ” country, he said it would put her in the position of Canada. Is Canada, then, a “ foreign ” country ? The idea is almost preposterous. But why should not Ireland be put in the position of Canada ? “ Because,” replies

the right hon. gentleman, "Canada is friendly to the Empire, and Ireland is not." But was Canada always friendly? The hon. member for West Birmingham had quoted from certain passages in the speeches of Mr. Butt on the subject. I will, however, quote another passage from a speech of Mr. Butt, in which, speaking of Canada, he said—

"In 1839 Canada was with difficulty held by force of arms for the British Crown. Canada was in open rebellion. Canada was at a distance from England—close to a great republic, which was certainly not unwilling to incorporate the Canadian provinces with their States. The experiment was tried of giving Canada Home Rule. It has not disintegrated the Empire."

But it was argued the cases were different because in Ireland there were two nations. Well, I may say by way of parentheses that we (Nationalists) detest the idea of there being two nations in Ireland. There has been too much bitterness between Irishmen, and we have always looked forward with hope and some confidence to the day when these bitter feelings would cease, and men of all creeds in Ireland would be able to join in an effort for the elevation of their common country. But were there no two nations in Canada? On the contrary. Canada had two provinces differing in race, in religion, in language, and in law. Lower Canada contained a great French population hostile to England, alienated from her by the memories of recent conquest, and Catholic in their religion. Upper Canada was chiefly peopled by English Protestant settlers—by Puritans from Scotland, and Irish Orangemen from the Bann. Home Rule was granted to Canada. The two provinces were united under one Parliament—with all these elements of distraction, and disaffection, and danger—is the Empire disintegrated? Has Canada flung herself into the arms of the United States? Is Canada torn by domestic

dissensions? Canada, instead of being as it was in 1839, the most disaffected and rebellious dependency of Britain, is now the most attached to the English connection, the most loyal in its allegiance to the British Crown. Provinces that seemed arrayed against each other in hopeless antagonism and discord, are now united together. With the differences, and the passions, and the party strifes that agitate all constitutional governments—the French Catholics of Lower Canada, and the English Puritans, and the Irish Orangemen of Upper Canada, meet in one Parliament to serve the interests of that common country, attachment to which is no longer at variance with a true allegiance to the British Crown. The right hon. gentleman says Canada is only held by a “voluntary tie.” But does the right hon. gentleman, who is regarded as a leader of democratic thought in this country, mean to say he prefers an Union based upon force, as the present Union with Ireland, to an Union which rests upon the will of the people? Edmund Burke said—“A voluntary tie is a more secure link of connection than subordination borne with grudging and discontent.” So say we, and so also we believe will say the democracy of England, even though some of its so-called leaders refuse to trust the people of Ireland.

But the argument of the right hon. gentleman may be met in another way. I utterly deny that this Bill will put Ireland in the position of Canada. No colony pays any portion of the National Debt. Ireland under this Bill will pay a portion of the National Debt. No colony pays any portion of Imperial taxation while Ireland would do so. No colony pays Custom duties imposed by the Imperial Parliament, Ireland would do so. The colonies fix their own electoral law, but the electoral law for Ireland was to be fixed by the Imperial Parliament.

Then the colonies could have an army and navy of their own, but Ireland would not have either an army or navy of her own. But we were told because Irish Members are to be withdrawn from Westminster, Ireland will become a colony. On this much vexed question I have a word or two to say. As a Nationalist, I may say I do not regard as entirely palatable the idea that for ever and a day Ireland's voice should be excluded from the councils of an empire which the genius and valour of her sons have done so much to build up, and of which she is to remain a part. I conceive, however, that even in the Bill as it stands, the permanent exclusion of Irish Members is not contemplated, and the Premier, by one of the modifications which he has announced, has provided that by address the Irish Parliament can obtain the right of being heard at Westminster whenever it desires. Beyond this, at present we do not desire to go. We look at this matter as practical men. If we get our Irish assembly, heaven knows we will have a task heavy and weighty enough in the effort to bind together the disunited fragments of the nation, and to repair the shattered fortunes of our unfortunate country—a task which will tax all the resources, all the talent, and all the industry of Irishmen. I do believe that if that work is to be satisfactorily performed we can not stand the additional drain rendered necessary by representation in this House. Further than this, I do not see how such representation is under present conditions practicable. The Federal idea I understand and sympathise with. I look forward to the day when it may be applied to England, Scotland, and Wales, as well as Ireland. Then the character of the so-called Imperial Parliament would be changed. It would be then only an Imperial Parliament, and all the kingdoms, having their own National Parliaments, might be represented

in it. But if Ireland alone has a Parliament of her own, I do not see how she can be permanently represented in what is not only the Imperial Parliament but the Legislature of England and of Scotland. If such representation were admitted, you must either allow Irishmen who had sole control of Irish affairs to interfere in and probably decide purely English and Scotch affairs—an obvious injustice, or else you must do what the Premier declared it surpassed the wit of man to accomplish, namely, make a definite and permanent distinction between Imperial and local affairs. The hon. member who last spoke said he believed that the concession of autonomy to Ireland would lead to separation. I would ask how Ireland was held now?

Lord Arthur Hill—By force.

I thank the hon. member for the word. It is now held by force; but does the present Bill propose to take away that force, which I presume means the English army and navy and the police? No; it still left these forces under Imperial control. But in addition to physical force, you would have working on the side of connection and against separation the moral force springing from justice conceded, which the English Government of Ireland has never yet had upon its side.

I now come to what, after all, seemed to be the chief objection to Home Rule, in the minds of most Englishmen, and which might be summed up in the word "Ulster." Ulster, they say, is a Protestant and anti-Nationalist province, and could not be put under the dominion of a Nationalist Parliament in Dublin. But let me ask, is Ulster either Protestant or anti-Nationalist? First, is Ulster Protestant? Last year a return was issued by Parliament giving the religious denominations of the population of Ulster. From that it appeared that forty-

eight per cent. of the whole population was Catholic, and remaining fifty-two per cent. was made up of all other creeds, and leaving Belfast out, the Catholics were to-day fifty-five per cent. of the whole population. But their case was stronger even than that. It had recently been pointed out that Ulster might well be divided into two distinct portions—one portion consisting of Antrim and portions of Down and Armagh, containing a majority of Protestants, they being three-fourths of the population; the other portion, consisting of Donegal, Tyrone, Derry, Fermanagh, Cavan, Monaghan, and portions of Down and Armagh, containing a majority of Catholics, they being two-thirds of the population. The exact figures were—in the first portion, Catholics, 188,289; Protestants, 542,862. In the second portion, Catholics, 645,279; and Protestants, 316,647. In the face of these facts, can Ulster truthfully be termed a Protestant province? The right hon. gentleman, the member for West Birmingham, speaks of the necessity of a separate Parliament for Ulster. His object is to protect the Protestants. But surely if any Protestants wanted protection, they were, not those in Ulster, but those in the South and West who were in such a miserable minority. But would a Parliament in Ulster fulfil his object even in that province? Why, unless the entire basis of representation be changed, such a Parliament must inevitably contain a majority of Catholics. Now, let me ask, is Ulster anti-National? The answer is supplied by the returns at the last elections. Out of the nine counties of Ulster only one, namely Antrim, went solid against Home Rule, and if my hon. friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had secured thirty-eight more votes in Belfast, not even one solitary county in Ulster or in Ireland would have declared against Home Rule. Four entire counties—Donegal, Fermanagh, Cavan,

and Monaghan—went solid for Home Rule. The remaining four counties—namely, Derry, Tyrone, Armagh, and Down—were so divided that the net result was to give the Nationalists a clear majority of the Ulster seats, while Belfast and Derry were only lost by thirty-seven and twenty-seven votes. In the face of these facts, it is the utmost folly to speak of Ulster as anti-National. There is one somewhat frivolous matter to which I would wish to refer—the war-like intentions of a certain party in Ireland. I hold in my hand an interesting statement from a well-known gentleman in Ireland. Writing on this subject, he says:—

“If the men of Ulster fight at all it will not be with the rest of Ireland, but with each other. The men of Antrim, Down, and Armagh, before conquering Leinster, Connaught, and Munster, will have to take in hand the subjugation of the six other Ulster counties. Ditches will have to be lined, not merely north of the Boyne, but west of the Bann—not merely from Belfast to Dublin, but from Belfast to Donegal, and from Armagh to Derry. In short, the idea of the Protestant portion of Ulster conquering the Catholic portion is as absurd as the contention that Lancashire could conquer the northern counties of England. Although there are Orangemen and Protestants in every one of the nine Ulster counties, it is only in Antrim, Down, and Armagh that they could assemble in sufficient strength to overawe the local Catholics. However, although it is the wildest nonsense to imagine anything of the kind, let it be understood that the Orangemen in the north-east of Ulster have taken up arms under the command of Major Saunderson and Mr. Johnson, of Ballykilbeg, with a view to the reduction and occupation of the remainder of the province as the result of the Repeal of the Union. To begin with, on entering Monaghan the Orange army, or rather mob, would find itself in a country inhabited by 27,000 Protestants and 76,000 Catholics. On pushing forward into Cavan, the Orangemen would be amongst 25,000 Protestants and 105,000 Catholics. In Fermanagh, their task of subjugation would be comparatively light, as the Catholics in that county are only fifty-six per cent.; but in Donegal the Orange army or mob, or rather what remained of it, would be simply swallowed up, for in that wildly remote, and extensive and inhospitable region, possessing

admirable facilities for a defensive warfare, the Protestants are only 48,000 in number, the Catholics being 158,000."

I ought to apologise for even alluding shortly to this matter, but I have done so for the purpose of enlivening the somewhat tedious character of my remarks. I deeply regret having to speak of Protestants and Catholics in connection with the matter at all. Ours is not a sectarian, but a National movement. If Home Rule were granted, the Protestant minority would have equal rights and liberties with their Catholic fellow-countrymen. The truth is the Catholics of Ireland entertain feelings of deep respect and affection for their Protestant fellow-countrymen. Protestants led the National movements of Ireland for generations. A Protestant Parliament, in 1793, struck the first blow at the Penal Code and commenced the work of Catholic Emancipation; Protestant patriots shed their blood on the scaffold and in the field in defence of the liberties of their Catholic countrymen; and there is not a single one of the Catholic leaders of the people to-day who would not reject with scorn and derision any settlement of the National question which did not secure for the Protestants of Ireland full civil and religious liberty. Some hon. members in this House—Radicals in principle—object to the first order which, elected on a higher franchise, is to form part of the Irish Legislature under this Bill, as being contrary to democratic ideas. Do they think that we are less democratic than they are, and do they wonder why we accept such provisions? I will tell them. It is because, although we know the fears of our Protestant fellow-countrymen are unworthy and unfounded fears, at the same time we recognise those fears, and we desire by every means in our power to give guarantees to every section and every creed amongst

our countrymen, that our sole object in this movement is to build up a united and a prosperous Irish nation. On the details I will not speak further than I have done, and I have only a few more words to say in conclusion.

A passing allusion was made by the Prime Minister in his great speech in introducing this measure to the historic mission of Lord Fitzwilliam to Ireland in 1795. It seems to me that there are many circumstances connected with the present situation similar to the circumstances which attended the mission of Lord Fitzwilliam. At that time the Irish Parliament had commenced the work of Catholic emancipation, and at last Edmund Burke and some others had induced the English Cabinet to adopt a policy of conciliation and emancipation, and Lord Fitzwilliam was the bearer of a message of peace to Ireland, as the right hon. gentlemen the Chief Secretary (Mr. Morley) was the bearer of a message of peace to Ireland the other day. The hopes of the Irish people were raised high, and it would be difficult indeed for any man to say how entirely different the whole course of Irish history might have been if Lord Fitzwilliam had been allowed to carry his policy into effect; but evil counsels prevailed in England—the policy of conciliation, that policy which has since been acknowledged as a policy of justice—was wrecked. The policy of justice was reversed. Lord Fitzwilliam was withdrawn, and a return was made to the old old policy of repression. Then followed the rebellion of '98, and the many disasters which have marked the connection of the two countries. I don't wish to be a prophet of evil—I don't believe that similar results will follow from the wrecking of this Bill, but remember the words of Henry Grattan when he said:—

“Lord Fitzwilliam is offering to the Empire the affection of millions of hearts.”

I ask you, is the offering of the affection of millions of hearts which the Prime Minister is to-day making to the Empire to be rejected as was the offering of Lord Fitzwilliam. One thing, English politicians must make up their minds about, and that is that this question must be settled, and every moment of delay increases the difficulties and dangers of that position. Every speech conceived in a bitter spirit, by either Irishmen or Englishmen, must tend to increase the evils and dangers of the moment. The spirit in which the Prime Minister has addressed himself to the question, the spirit of large-heartedness and justice which he exhibited, has called forth a responsive feeling in the breasts of the Irish people right round the world. If that be the spirit in which Englishmen address themselves to the consideration of this question, then I have some hope for the near future of Ireland. But if passion and prejudice, if forgetfulness of the history of Ireland, and impatience at her faults are allowed once again to sway the public mind and to influence Parliament, I confess I cannot look forward to the near future without the gravest apprehension. Should calamity follow an unwise and hasty rejection of this Bill, we, at any rate, will not be responsible, for we will allow no act or word of ours to intensify the dangers and difficulties of the situation. We make our appeal to-day to the newly enfranchised democracy of England. Eternal will be its honour through all the ages, and priceless will be its recompense, if its first great work, after achieving its own enfranchisement, should be to fill up the gulf of hatred and distrust which for so long a time has divided the two nations, by a just and a wise concession

to that national sentiment in Ireland which, however much some Englishmen may affect to deride it, has yet dominated Irish character for seven centuries, and must be recognised and respected if Ireland is ever to become, as I fervently pray she may soon become, a peaceful, free, and contented nation.

THE HOME RULE BILL, 1893.

SPEECH ON SECOND READING IN HOUSE OF COMMONS,

14TH APRIL, 1893.

X.

MR. SPEAKER.—There was one statement in the speech of the right hon. gentleman (Right Hon. Henry Chaplin) with which I most cordially agree. He described this as a great occasion, and spoke of the gravity of the issue at stake. But I venture to say that no right hon. gentleman occupying the position of ex-Cabinet Minister ever made upon a great and historic occasion, upon the discussion of a great issue, a speech so absolutely flat, stale, and unprofitable. That speech scarcely touched upon the great issue at stake. That issue is whether this Parliament will confer upon Ireland the management of her own affairs; whether it will entrust to the people of Ireland a representative constitution, and in a speech occupying the time of the House for an hour and a-half the right hon. gentleman never did more than read from quotations the opinion of others on the abstract question. The right hon. gentleman is a type of the English governors of Ireland—the men who have made Ireland disaffected, and who have made the concession of Home Rule absolutely inevitable. Was there, from beginning to end of the speech, a single statement to show that the right hon. gentleman was acquainted with the past government or with the history of the country whose right to self-government

he ventured to deny? Was there one generous thought in his speech or one spark or glimmer of hope for Ireland? The right hon. gentleman opposes the concession of Home Rule to Ireland, but what is his alternative? It is simply a continuance of the principles of government that have made the name of England a by-word and a reproach among the nations of the world. I do not desire to pursue the speech of the right hon. gentleman. I did hope that it would not be necessary for me in the fulfilment of a duty to myself and to those whom I represent to take part in the debate at this stage of the Bill. The speeches that have been made in the course of the debate have been of two distinct classes. We have had on one side those who have criticised the details of the Bill which should be more properly discussed in Committee, and on the other we have had those who discussed the broad principle of the Bill. This latter class of speakers have been hampered by the consideration that they have been merely repeating for the hundredth time every argument with which the country has been ringing for the last seven years. I do not desire in the observations I have to make to anticipate the Committee stage of the Bill, nor do I want merely to utter platitudes on the principle of self-government; and, indeed, I should have been content to remain silent altogether but for the duty cast upon me by statements made in this House and out of it. It is said that we have refused to accept this measure—that we dispute the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament; that we will make no compromise between what we consider the full measure of right that we are entitled to, and the concession which one of the great parties of the State is willing to make to us. Now, that is a complete misrepresentation. Of course this Bill does not concede to Ireland all that we ask or all that we

are entitled to. This Bill is a compromise between the full demands which Ireland has made in the past and that which you are willing to concede to us. The constitution offered is a compromise, and is accepted as a compromise. The right hon. gentleman the member for West Birmingham complains that we do not say that this is a final and immutable constitution. I would ask the right hon. gentleman what right this House or what right England has to ask any such guarantee from us. I say candidly that I do not believe that this measure, if passed into law, will be final or immutable.

I believe this constitution will be a success, and I believe it will be a success because I believe—that will be the reason of its success—that it will develope. In the future, in the working of this constitution, the bonds of freedom will be made wider still for Ireland, and that with the consent of England, as a direct result of the reasonable use of the powers obtained under it. If Ireland shows, as she will show, a real capacity for self-government, this constitution must develop. He would be a rash man, indeed, who would say that the written constitution you now seek to confer is for all time, or is to remain a final and immutable constitution. Let me test this matter. Suppose you put into the Bill a clause saying that it is to be a final and immutable settlement, it would not be worth the paper it would be written upon. The very fact that this Imperial Parliament is, and will continue to be supreme, if the Act of Union is valid, makes it utterly impossible for any law that it may make to be final and immutable. And, again, suppose that every Irishman alive were to join in giving an undertaking that he would regard the constitution as final, of what value would that guarantee be? No, we cannot bind the future—the future, with its new interests, its

wider opinions, and its higher aspirations in the generations to come. In that sense I absolutely decline to give any such guarantee as the right hon. gentleman the member for West Birmingham thinks necessary from those who commend this Bill to the consideration of the country. But that was not what the right hon. gentleman meant. He meant that we in saying that we will accept this Bill will do so in bad faith, and with no desire to find in the working of the measure a solution of the Irish question, and that is for the purpose of showing that this measure has designs hostile to the English Government and the Empire. That is what he means. For my part, I disclaim any such intention.

It is true we decline to pledge ourselves that this must remain a final settlement. It is true we regard this Bill as a compromise and not as a full concession of all we are entitled to obtain, but we wish to accept the measure in a fair, honest, and candid spirit, and to work it for all it is worth in the hope and belief that it may put an end to the old chapter of English oppression and Irish resistance. But the right hon. gentleman, the member for West Birmingham, says there is the question of the Imperial Parliament. It is not necessary for me to dwell a moment longer upon that point. I challenge anyone in this House to quote a statement of mine, or any of those associated with me, that so long as we remain partners in the Empire at all, and so long as the Act of Union remains unrepealed the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament is to be, or can be abrogated. We have maintained that the concession of free institutions in Ireland means that you have put trust in the Irish people, and that the interference of this Parliament in the working of those institutions would be absolutely inconsistent. Representative institutions exists in other portions

of the Empire. How many of them would exist in six months if this House took into its head to exercise its right as a supreme legislature? The concession of representative institutions to Ireland means that you have made up your minds to let us manage our own affairs, free from the interference of the Imperial Parliament. It is true that hon. gentlemen anticipate that the necessity for interference by this Parliament will cease. That may be. I think it will, for I am one of those who agree with Mr. Parnell's opinion, that the Irish people under Home Rule will be shrewd enough to know that any violation of the constitution or oppression by that Parliament will be so many nails driven into the coffin of the constitution, and I do not, therefore, think that the occasion for interference will arise. If it does arise nothing we can say, nothing we can do, nothing that you can put in an Act of Parliament now so long as the Union remains unrepealed, can deprive you of the right to control the Irish Parliament, as you can control the Australian and Canadian Parliaments, and to check the growth of oppression and injustice.

I do not intend to dwell, even for a moment, on the question of finance. I have nothing to add—I have not been able to add—to my sources of information, and therefore I have nothing to add to what I said on the first reading of the Bill on this point. But the longer these financial clauses have been studied, the more they have been distrusted. It is right we should be perfectly candid in a matter of this kind. I have met no member of any political party whatever in Ireland who has been able to tell me that Ireland could be successfully worked and successfully governed under the financial clauses of the Bill as they now stand; and I would add that if the clauses are to remain in their present form, the Government and their supporters in this House

will have to recognise the fact that it will become a horrible responsibility for any Irish representative to accept this Bill as a settlement. No representative can do so unless the Bill contains in the financial portion provisions to enable the Government of Ireland to be successfully carried on. Leaving details on this head aside for discussion in Committee, I pass on to what I take to be the real issue at stake.

The real issue is whether you will make up your minds to confer upon Ireland a representative Government—a Government which will give constitutional expression to the will and the voice of her people. There are two ways in which this great and vital principle might be regarded. There is the Irish way and there is the English way. We look upon the principle as one to be conceded to us as of right. We do not entirely or mainly rest our claim for free representative institutions on grievances. We rest our claim on right. The right hon. gentleman, the member for West Birmingham, thinks that if Mr. Pitt had been able to carry Catholic Emancipation the Union would have been popular, and that the passage of remedial measures would have been of equal service in cementing the Irish and English peoples. We look at it from a different standpoint. We do not rest our claim solely or mainly on grievances. If the government of my country by Englishmen were the best that could have been devised by the wit of man, I would be as strong a Home Ruler as I am to-day. Without exaggeration, I believe this—that Irish Nationalists would rather be badly governed by their own countrymen than live under the best English government you could give them. We say that Ireland is a distinct and separate Nationality in point of historic importance. It was a nation long before England. For over 600 years Ireland had her own Parliament, which had an exclusive right to legislate for the Irish

people. That Parliament was robbed from Ireland by violence and corruption, and against the will of the people. Do English members always recall that fact?

In 1799, when the Government of the day proposed the Union, that measure would not have been carried had that Parliament been dissolved after the defeat of the Government. But it was not dissolved. The Catholics had been enfranchised years before, but they were not allowed to exercise the franchise. The right hon. gentleman referred to armed insurrection, and said that Ireland was deficient in the qualities that would sustain such insurrection. It is impossible for a country like Ireland, with all the advances of military science, to be ready for armed insurrection, but I assert the spirit of resistance still lives as it ought to live, the spirit is alive now as in any period for the last century, and my most fervent prayer is that it will meet with no provocation in the rejection of measures of conciliation or in unworthy taunts such as those of the member for West Birmingham. So much for the Irish way. I know it is of far greater moment to dwell on the matter from an English point of view. From the point of view of most Irishmen this matter is looked at from the standpoint that they are entitled to it by right. How did the facts stand from the other point of view? Here are two countries closely connected with much in common by nature and by admixture of race, yet distinct in history and in nationality. The present Prime Minister spoke some remarkable words on this subject in this House even so long ago as 1866. What is the relation which has existed between these two peoples? It cannot be denied that it is a record of shame on one side—of resistance on the other; of bloodshed, of wasted treasure, of national dishonour. Has your government of Ireland succeeded? I don't want to go back into history. I won't go further than the Act of

Union. You have had famines. You have had armed insurrections. You have been obliged to keep a standing army in Ireland equal to that you had at the Crimea. During the whole of the century you have had a Coercion Act for every year. The right hon. gentleman who addressed the House to-night spoke lightly of coercion, but coercion means the abrogation more or less at different times of the full benefits of the British Constitution. It, therefore, means that during your ninety-three years' rule of Ireland you have had eighty Coercion Acts, each one of them abrogating more or less the full rights of the British Constitution. Ireland's population has diminished. Her material prosperity has disappeared. Your government of Ireland has become a bye-word amongst the nations; and finally at the end of this nineteenth century, which has seen the blessings of liberty slowly but surely reaching almost every subject race in the world, at the end of that century a great English party has been obliged by the Bill now before the House to condemn that union, that system of government which has so utterly failed, and which can only be preserved by the permanent suspension of those rights of constitution such as the right of trial by jury which it is your boast that you desire to see extended to even the eastern races under your sway. It seems to me that all this goes to show conclusively that the old system has been tried and has failed—that it has hampered and almost destroyed this Parliament—that the whole world has called “Shame on it;” and whether it be amended by this Bill and by this Government, or by another Bill and another Government I know not, but every far-seeing man must admit in his heart that the day is almost dawning when that system will be replaced by a system based on the affections, the will, and the confidence of the governed.

I notice that the opponents of the Bill have kept themselves clear from broad considerations and principles such as these. They have taken up rather a policy of fastening on particular difficulties, and magnifying them enormously, in order to frighten public opinion, but they forget that if all the difficulties, probably many, which may follow from Home Rule were increased a hundred fold, they could not by any possibility create as bad a state of things as exists in the relations between the two countries at the present moment. The right hon. gentleman, the member for West Birmingham, fears that after Home Rule Ireland will be disaffected. Does he believe that Ireland is well affected now? He believes that England's difficulty will be Ireland's opportunity after Home Rule. Does he not know that if you reject this measure of concession it will be the darling wish of every Irishman to use all your difficulties as opportunities for advancing the National cause? Has he ever considered what will happen if this Bill is rejected? Heaven forbid that I should indulge in what might be construed by our enemies into menaces. But can any man contemplate with equanimity what consequences may follow if you reject that which has kept Ireland tranquil and crimeless for seven years? We are told that if this Bill passes there will be disturbances in Ulster. Can hon. gentlemen consider the possibility of disturbances in other parts of Ireland if the Bill is rejected? Reject this Bill, wreck the hopes upon which the Irish people have been relying, reimpose coercion, and which of you will undertake the government of Ireland by any form of Constitutional Government whatever? The alternative to the policy represented by the Bill would be not only a Coercion Act, but it would inevitably be a disfranchisement of Ireland and the establishment of a military despotism

The argument about Ulster is false and misleading. The very name of the Ulster question itself is a false one. There is no Ulster question. There may be a Belfast question—there may be a question of a small corner of Ulster, but it is false to speak of this question as an Ulster question. The present population of Ulster, including Belfast, contains forty-six per cent. of Catholics. Leaving out Belfast, it shows a fair majority of Catholics over Protestants. I deny altogether that every Protestant is an anti-Nationalist. I know something of the means that are used in Ireland to keep up this agitation against Home Rule. You talk of boycotting in the time of the Land League. I say that boycotting has been brought to a fine art by the Unionists of Ireland against any Protestant who is independent enough to declare himself on our side. There are in Ulster, including even Belfast, forty-six per cent. of Catholics, and admittedly the Ulster Catholics are Home Rulers, and with a margin of Protestants in favour of Home Rule, I am convinced that at least one-half of the entire population of Ulster is favourable to this Bill. But suppose there are only forty-six per cent. of the population of Ulster favourable to the Bill, how false to speak of this as an Ulster question. Besides that, Ulster is not, as is so often said, the only prosperous province in Ireland. I wish Ulster were as prosperous as Unionist members endeavour to depict her. Belfast is prosperous, and long live her prosperity; but as Belfast has grown in prosperity Ulster has declined. There are nine counties in Ulster, and within the last fifty years whilst the population of Belfast has increased the population of these nine counties has diminished by one million of people. In face of that fact, can it be pretended that the population of Ulster is the only prosperous population in

Ireland? That diminution of the population of Ulster is greater than the diminution in some of the other provinces, and the strange thing is that the decrease in population is not greatest where the people are thriftless Catholic Nationalists—the diminution is less in the Catholic County of Donegal than in those counties which contain a large proportion of prosperous Protestants. I say, that this agitation against the Bill is promoted by a small minority of the Protestants of Ireland. Large masses of the Protestants are, no doubt, frightened by the Bill. I do not wonder at it. They have had in their hands for generations an absolute monopoly of all power and place and patronage. To be born a child of this favoured race in Ireland is to be provided for by some place or position of emolument from one's cradle. No wonder, then, that large masses of them are against a system which would distribute this patronage, power, and influence amongst the people. But whilst these feelings are prevalent amongst Protestants generally, the men who have fomented and instigated this bitter and violent agitation in Ireland against Home Rule are not the general body but a small section comprising the Orange Society.

I would recall to the House the origin of the Society. It sprang into existence in 1795—a fateful and terrible year for Ireland. At that time the Protestant Parliament of Ireland had commenced the work of Catholic Emancipation—commenced it thirty years before your enlightened English Parliament carried it out. That Protestant Parliament of Ireland had at its back in support of Catholic Emancipation the far larger part of the Protestants of the country. Lord Fitzwilliam has declared that at the time of his recall the Protestants of Ireland generally were favourable to Emancipation. But the minority—the unreason-

ing and fanatical minority amongst the Protestants—used their influence with England, and the beneficent policy of Lord Fitzwilliam was reversed. Lord Fitzwilliam was withdrawn. This unreasoning minority of Protestants at once formed themselves into the Orange Society, and then by their excesses, their fanaticism, they drove the Irish people to arms. I have here abundant proof of my statement. Lord Cornwallis, writing to the Duke of Portland in July, 1798, said:—

“The principal persons (*i.e.*, the Orangemen) are in general adverse to all acts of clemency, and although they do not express it, and perhaps are too much heated to see the ultimate effects which their violence must produce, would pursue measures that could only terminate in the extirpation of the great number of the inhabitants, and in the utter destruction of the country. The words Papists and Priests are forever in their mouths, and by this unaccountable folly they would drive four-fifths of the community into irreconcilable rebellion.”

In the same year Lord Cornwallis also wrote:—

“The principal personages—*i.e.*, Beresford, &c.—who have long been in the habit of directing the Councils of the Lord Lieutenants, are blinded by their passions and prejudices, talk of nothing but strong measures, and arrogate to themselves the exclusive knowledge of a country of which from their mode of governing it they have in my opinion, proved themselves totally ignorant. Religious animosities increase, and I am sorry to say are encouraged by the foolish violence of all the principal persons who have been in the habit of governing this island.”

I say there are abundant proofs of my statement that this unreasonable minority, comprising the Orange Society, drove the people into insurrection. Mr. Goodwin Smith, who is now a Unionist, and whose voice is received as the voice of a prophet, wrote in his *Irish History and Irish Character*:—

"The peasantry though undoubtedly in a disturbed state, might have been kept quiet by lenity, but they were gratuitously scourged and tortured into open rebellion. These were crimes not of individual ruffians, but of faction—a faction which must take its place in history beside that of Robespierre, Couthon, and Carriere. The murders by the Jacobins may have excited more indignation and pity, because the victims were of high rank, but in the use of torture the Orangemen seemed to have reached a pitch of fiendish cruelty, which was scarcely attained by the Jacobins. The dreadful Civil War of 1798 was the crime, as a candid study of its history will prove—not of the Irish people—but of the Orange terrorists, who literally goaded the people into insurrection."

This is the faction who in Ireland to-day are the instigators and the promoters of the more violent and unreasoning features of the Protestant agitation against Home Rule. That faction instigated religious differences—one of the greatest crimes that a man could be guilty of. They invoked religious hatreds in order to destroy the Parliament of Ireland, and to-day precisely the same agencies are at work. Religious fears and differences are availed of in support of the Union by men whose father's bigotry and intolerance brought about the Union.

It has been said that Grattan's Parliament was a failure. I deny it. Grattan's Parliament in 1793 admitted the Catholics to the franchise, to serve on juries, to the professions, and to the universities, and it was not till thirty years afterwards that this Imperial Parliament completed the work of Emancipation. That Protestant Parliament was willing to extend liberty to their Catholic fellow-countrymen, and it was the hand of England that interposed between the Protestant Parliament and the masses of their countrymen. The minority of Protestants who opposed Catholic Emancipation in 1793, who got Lord Fitzwilliam recalled in 1795, and whose bigotry and fanaticism drove the people into arms in 1798—these are the men

whose lineal descendants to-day are promoters of this unreasoning and violent agitation against Home Rule. These are the men of whom Mr. John Bright, speaking in this House, used these words :—

“These Ulstermen have stood in the way of improvement in the franchise, in the Church and in the Land question. They have purchased Protestant ascendancy, and the price paid for it is the ruin and degradation of their country.”

What, I ask, is the meaning of this Belfast scare? Do hon. gentlemen really think that the Irish Parliament will at once set itself to the task of destroying Belfast? Why, it is too absurd to argue. Do they really think that the Catholic majority in that Parliament will at once set about persecuting the Protestant minority? A more insulting and humiliating charge was never brought against the people. We are entitled, when that charge is made, to ask our opponents to point to a single period of Irish history when the Irish Catholics were guilty of those acts of oppression which English Catholics were undoubtedly guilty of. There were periods when the Catholics of Ireland had in their hands the power to oppress their Protestant fellow-countrymen, but these periods were marked by a spirit of tolerance displayed by the Catholics towards the Protestants. The reign of Mary was marked by the oppression of Protestants by Catholics in England, including the burning of several Protestants at the stake, but we have it on the authority of the Protestant historians, Leland and Taylor, that in the reign of Mary the Dublin Corporation rented seventy-four houses for the shelter of refugees from the persecution of Protestants in England. The Protestant writer, Taylor, in his history of the civil wars in Ireland, testifies as follows :—

“The restoration of the religion was effected without violence. No persecution of the Protestants was attempted, and several of the English who fled from the furious zeal of Mary’s inquisitors found a safe refuge among the Catholics of Ireland. It is but justice to this maligned body to add that on those occasions of their obtaining the upper hand they never injured a single person in life or limb for professing a religion different to their own. They had suffered persecution and learned mercy as they showed in the reign of Mary, in the wars from 1641 to 1648, and during the brief triumph of James II.”

The Secretary for Scotland in his speech the other night told us that some very horrible woodcuts, by George Cruikshank, depicting horrible occurrences in Ireland were being circulated throughout England. The same policy was adopted in 1886. The most atrocious falsehoods and calumnies against the people of Ireland, pictorial and otherwise, were circulated throughout this country. I hold in my hand a publication issued by a Tory candidate and a Tory association, and I will read an extract from it to show the kind of calumny that is being palmed off on the people of England. It is in the form of a catechism, with questions and answers:—

“Question—Have the Irish ever had Home Rule, and how did they behave?

“Answer—They murdered every Englishman and Protestant they could lay their hands on in 1641. They were set on by the priests, who said that Protestants were devils and served the devil, and that the killing of them was a meritorious act. Altogether they killed in that year 150,000 Protestant men and women and children.”

That is the kind of calumny that is spread by our opponents throughout English constituencies. But what does Mr. Lecky say on this question of Catholic oppression—and surely hon. members will listen to Mr. Lecky’s words as the words of an impartial witness? He writes:—

"Irish history contains its full share of violence and massacre, but whoever will examine these episodes with impartiality may easily convince himself that their connection with religion has been most superficial. Religious crises have been sometimes raised. Religious enthusiasm has been often appealed to in the agony of a struggle, but the real causes have usually been the conflicts of races and classes, the struggle of nationality against annihilation. Among the Catholics—at least religious intolerance—has never been a prevailing vice, and those who have studied closely the history and character of the Irish people can hardly fail to be struck with the deep respect for sincere religion in every form which they have commonly evinced. Their original conversion to Christianity was probably accompanied by less violence and bloodshed than that of any equally considerable nation in Europe, and in spite of the fearful calamities which followed the Reformation, it is a memorable fact that not a single Protestant suffered for his religion in Ireland during all the period of the Marian persecution in England. The treatment of Bedell, a Protestant prelate, during the outbreak of 1641, and the Act establishing liberty of conscience passed by the Irish Parliament in 1689, in the full flush of the brief Catholic ascendancy under James II., exhibit very remarkably the aspect of the Irish character."

I am conscious that all this might be met by our opponents saying:—That is not the kind of persecution that we fear. We don't fear that we shall be burned at the stake, but we do fear that there will be a Catholic clerical ascendancy.

You will understand me when I say that I am likely to give impartial testimony on that matter. It is true that in the political life of Ireland the Catholic priesthood wield an enormous preponderating power, but they wield it largely because of the character of the struggle the people are waging. Still I am as convinced as I am of my own existence that the political power—the political supremacy, if you like—of the Catholic clergy, will not, if it is tried, be used successfully under a free Parliament of the Irish people. Surely the events of the past couple of years in Ireland, instead of giving alarm to the Protestants, should give them some encouragement. The hon. member for

Londonderry said in his speech the other night that I ought to be the last man in the House to say a word upon this subject. I say there is no man in this House who has a better right to speak on it. I and my comrades sit in this House as the result of defeating the unanimous opposition of the priests and bishops of Ireland. There is not one of us who was not opposed, as I was, determinedly, consistently, and unanimously by the entire priesthood of Ireland. Only a few of us have been returned, but I ask when in the past history of Ireland—even when the right hon. gentleman the member for West Birmingham was thinking of giving over education without any restriction to the people of Ireland—when, I ask, was such a spectacle afforded as 70,000 Catholic votes being recorded against practically the open opposition of the whole body of the priesthood of Ireland? I say that it is in that spirit of independence to clerical interference in political matters the Protestants will find in the future their best guarantee and safeguard.

To the Protestants of Ireland generally I will say this—If I believed that Home Rule would mean for the Protestants of Ireland, not the oppression at the stake, which, as you say, is unlikely and impossible—but if I thought it meant the abrogation of one whit of their just, civil, and religious liberties, I would, as an Irish Nationalist, oppose Home Rule, and would quit my country whose people had not learned the first elements of liberty. We, Irish Catholic Nationalists, owe too much in our past history to our Protestant fellow-countrymen ever to be guilty of the baseness of betrayal. We do not forget the history of Ireland. We do not forget that it was Protestants who won the Parliament of 1782; that it was Protestants who organized the Society of United Irishmen both before and after it had become a revolutionary organis-

ation. We do not forget that it was Protestants who gave the franchise to Catholics in 1793, that Protestants led the rebel army in '98, that Protestants gallantly but vainly defended Irish liberty in 1800; and we do not forget that every day that has passed since has witnessed the efforts of Protestants to defend and promote civil and religious liberty in the national life of Ireland.

The member for West Birmingham laid great stress on his distrust of the present Irish leaders. He did not, he said, distrust the people of Ireland. The right hon. gentleman resented the accusation that he had reproached the Irish people with having little of humanity except their form. Now it was not the people of Ireland the right hon. gentleman distrusted, but their leaders. But if he distrusted the leaders he must distrust those who followed them. If he distrusted the people, then he had a right to oppose this Bill; but I ask how long is it since the right hon. gentleman learned this distrust of the Irish leaders? I have abstained from arguments of a *tu quoque* character, which had been too frequent in that debate, but the temptation is irresistible to remind the right hon. gentleman of some incidents in his own past career. One of the reasons for the right hon. gentleman distrusting the Irish leaders was that they had been denounced as "marching through rapine and plunder" by the Prime Minister; but in the year 1885, long after the Prime Minister had denounced them as marching through rapine to dismemberment—long after the right hon. gentleman had made himself perfectly acquainted with them, and at a time when, as a matter of fact, the right hon. gentleman was in the closest and most confidential relations with some of the Irish leaders, there was published an article in the *Fort nightly Review*, which the right hon. gentleman admitted

when challenged in that House had been published with his sanction and approval, and the main lines of it could be regarded as his. In that article, he said :—

“What is the root of Irish discontent? Everyone recognises the existence of great grievances which distinguished the Government of Ireland at the commencement of the century, but many of them had been removed. The tithes have been abolished. Catholic Emancipation has been granted. Religious disabilities have been removed. The Irish Church has been disestablished, and last, and most important, the land laws have been reformed. In addition there has been a large use of Imperial funds and credit.”

And now I would call the recollection of the House to the statement of the member for West Birmingham, that Ireland was improving under remedial legislation, and if only the Prime Minister had let the improvement go on, and had not been in a hurry in 1885, the improvement would sooner or later have resulted in contentment. But what did the right hon. gentleman say in 1885? The article proceeded :—

“The Irish people are discontented still, and, probably there is more deep-seated disaffection with the English connection at the present time than at any previous period since the Union. These reforms have all been late. They have been the result of compulsion, not of justice. They have been proposed and carried by a foreign Government. What is needed in Ireland is that Irish legislation should be domestic and not foreign—Austria and Hungary.”

The right hon. gentleman scoffed at Austria and Hungary as a precedent now :—

“Austria and Hungary have long since settled their differences, yet England persists still in misgoverning Ireland, and has failed to endow her with a constitution that will command the loyalty and affection of the people.”

With what a face does the right hon. gentleman after declarations of that kind come down to the House and declare that the remedial legislation between 1869 and 1885 was gradually weaning the people away from disaffection, and only for the wicked meddler, the Prime Minister, in 1885, by this time I suppose the Irish Channel would have disappeared, or, at any rate, England and Ireland as two nations, would have merged into one harmonious whole. In conclusion, I earnestly impress just one other consideration upon the House. The malady from which Ireland is admittedly suffering is a deadly malady, and the case is urgent. It is not a case that will brook of delay. While doctors are differing the patient is dying. The very life-blood of Ireland is day by day ebbing away from her. Every specific has been tried for the cure of this malady. Every specific has been tried except one, and that is to allow the 'Irish people to make an attempt at any rate to cure themselves. Her disease is alike of the mind and body. I remember when a very young lad listening in the gallery of the House to a speech on this subject in the year 1876, and I remember Mr. Isaac Butt—whose name I, in common with large masses of the Irish people, will ever recall with reverence and affection—I remember Mr. Isaac Butt quoting to the House those noble words in "Macbeth," when Macbeth asked the physician:—

" Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased ;
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow ;
Raise out the written troubles of the brain,
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon her ?"

And I remember well the effect produced upon the

House when Mr. Butt went further, and recalled the answer of the physician, who said:—

“ Therein the patient must minister to herself.”

That is our case for Home Rule. We say that Ireland must minister to herself. Her malady has baffled the most skilful political physicians of this country, has baffled England's ablest administrators, her wisest legislators, her sagest councillors and statesmen. We say that Ireland's sole remaining hope is in herself. Ireland herself must minister to herself. She must bind up her own wounds and cure her own disorder. Those who say, as Lord Salisbury has done, that the Irish people, because they were mostly of the Celtic race, were unfitted for the use of representative institutions and for the enjoyment of freedom, made a declaration foreign to the whole experience and history of their Empire. In the creation of the Empire, in the Government of the Empire, in the councils of the Empire, in the exercise of those virtues and talents which were necessary for the practice of the arts of Government, I say that Irishmen have proved themselves equal to the best of Englishmen or Scotchmen or Welshmen. Go round the Empire on which you boast the sun never sets, and I defy you to find one spot where Irishmen have not made an exhibition of those talents and those virtues except one spot—that spot being the land of their birth and affections. I say to the House these great qualities and virtues are not yet extinct in the Irish race. Give them free scope, throw upon the shoulders of the people the sobering influence of responsibility—give them free scope, give them the bracing influences of a free constitution, and I am convinced, as that we are assembled in this Parliament to-day, that the Irish question,

which for a hundred years has been the torture and disgrace of this united Imperial Parliament, will in a few short years trouble them no more, and Ireland—poor depopulated, scourged, rightly disaffected Ireland—will be converted from what she is to-day, alike England's weakness and England's shame, into a portion of the Empire, which if not as prosperous and rich as happy England, will at least be as contented, as peaceful, and as free.

IRISH NATIONAL CONVENTION IN CHICAGO.

SPEECH DELIVERED ON 18TH AUGUST, 1886.

XI.

THE duty which devolves upon my colleagues and myself of representing the Irish nation at home, at this great gathering of the Irish nation abroad, is one in which the honour is great and the responsibility heavy. Perhaps the greatest glory of our nation is to be found in the fact that our people, driven by misfortune and misrule from the land of their fathers, and coming to this land rude, ignorant, and poor, have yet been able to bear an honourable part in building up the fortunes of America, and to give to the world undeniable proof that, in addition to the qualities of fidelity and honesty, Irishmen, under a free constitution, can be worthy sons and good citizens of their adopted country. The Irish people in this great republic, no less as American citizens than as Irish Nationalists, have arrested the attention and commanded the admiration of the world. The assembly of this day is a proof of devotion to a great cause, perhaps unparalleled in history.

The hardships, the oppressions, and the miseries which drove you or your fathers from Ireland, have wedded your hearts to Ireland's cause by ties which neither prosperity, nor distance, nor time, can destroy or weaken. No selfish

interests urge you to support the old cause, devotion to which brought ruin and death upon your forefathers and exile upon yourselves. Selfishness and worldly interests all point to another course as the best; but it is the undying glory of Ireland that her exiled sons, in the midst of prosperity, and in the light of liberty, have yet found time to absent themselves from felicity awhile to tell her story, and have made it a part of their daily life and nightly dream to help in working out her redemption.

The Irish soldier, whose sword was consecrated to the service of America, dreamed as he went into battle, of the day when his arm, skilled in the service of his adopted country, might strike a blow for Irish liberty. The Irish business man, who found in one of your gigantic cities scope for his enterprise and for his industry, looked forward to the day when from his store help might go across the Atlantic to sustain Ireland's champions on the old sod. The Irish labourer, whose brawny arms have built your railroads and reared your stately palaces, in the midst of his labours laid aside his daily or weekly mite to help those who were fighting, time after time, with one weapon or another, in the old cause against the old enemies of Ireland. Rich or poor, high or low, alike, the Irish in America have never forgotten the land whence they sprang, and our people at home, in their joys and their sorrows, in their hopes and in their fears, turn ever for help and encouragement, and confidence to this great republic, upon whose fortunes and whose future rest to-day the blessings of the Irish race. To assist at this great convention of the Irish nation in America, especially to stand here as we do, as the ambassadors sent here to represent the Irish nation at home, is indeed a supreme honour which we can never over-estimate and can never forget.

But it is also an honour which bears with it indeed an

overwhelming sense of responsibility—the responsibility of showing to you that we who are conducting this movement at home are worthy of your confidence, and have a right to claim your continued support; the responsibility also of clearly placing before you the conditions upon which alone we can accept that support or value that confidence. Let me dwell a moment upon these two points. Are we worthy of your confidence, and have we a right to claim your continued support? In order to answer this question satisfactorily we must show, first, that we are guided by the same principle and animated by the same hopes as yourselves; and in the second place, that our movement is conducted on a wise and honest policy. What is the principle underlying this movement? It is the unquestioned recognition of the nationality of Ireland. We are working not simply for the removal of grievances or the amelioration of the material condition of our people. Nothing, I think, is plainer than if Ireland had in the past abandoned principle, she could easily have bartered her national rights to England, and in return have obtained a certain amount of material prosperity. If only our forefathers had meekly accepted the yoke of an alien rule, Ireland's fetters would have been gilded, and the hand which for centuries has scourged her would have given her, as a slave, indulgences and favours which would have perhaps saved her from sufferings which are without a parallel in the history of oppression. If, at the bidding of England, Ireland had ages since abandoned her religion, and consented to merge her nationality, we might to-day be the sleekest of slaves, fattened by the bounty of our conquerors. Scotland, by even a smaller compromise of her national existence, has secured for herself comparative prosperity. But Ireland has preferred rags and an unconquered spirit of liberty to favours won by national dishonour.

The principle embodied in the Irish movement of to-day is just the same principle which was the soul of every Irish movement for the last seven centuries—the principle of rebellion against the rule of strangers; the principle which Owen Roe O’Neil vindicated at Benburb; which animated Tone and Fitzgerald, and to which Emmet sacrificed a stainless life. Let no man desecrate that principle by giving it the ignoble name of hatred of England. Race hatred is at best an unreasoning passion. I, for one, believe in the brotherhood of nations, and bitter as the memory is of past wrongs and present injustice inflicted upon our people by our alien rulers, I assert the principle underlying our movement is not the principle of revenge for the past but of justice for the future. When a question of that principle arises there can be no such thing as compromise. The Irish leader who would propose to compromise the national claims of Ireland, who would even incline for one second to accept as a settlement of our demand any concession short of the unquestioned recognition of that nationality which has come down to us sanctified by the blood and tears of centuries, would be false to Ireland’s history and would forfeit all claims upon your confidence or support. Such a contingency can never arise, for the man who would be traitor enough to propose such a course would find himself no longer a leader. No man can barter away the honour of a nation. The one great principle of any settlement of the Irish question must be the recognition of the divine right of Irishmen and Irishmen alone, to rule Ireland. This is the principle in support of which you are assembled to-day; this is the principle which guides our movement in Ireland. But consistently with that principle we believe it is possible to bring about a settlement honourable to England and Ireland alike, whereby the wrongs and miseries of the past may be forgotten; whereby the chapter

of English wrongs and of Irish resistance may be closed; and whereby a future of freedom and of amity between the two nations may be inaugurated.

Such a settlement, we believe, was offered to us by Mr. Gladstone, and quite apart from the increased strength which Mr. Gladstone's proposals, even though temporarily defeated, have given to our cause, we have, I think, reason to rejoice at the opportunity which they afforded to our suffering and exasperated people to show the magnanimity of their natures and the unalloyed purity of their love of liberty. What a spectacle Ireland afforded to the world, when at last one great Englishman arose bold enough and wise enough to do justice to her character! Ages of heartless oppression and bitter wrong, hundreds of thousands of martyrs to Irish freedom, ages of stupid religious persecution, ages of depopulation and state-created famine, never-ending insult, and ruthless calumny—all in that one moment were forgotten, and the feelings uppermost in the hearts of the Irish race at home and abroad were gratitude to the aged statesman who simply proposed to do justice, and anxiety for a "blessed oblivion of the past." Who, in the face of the reception given to the Bill of Mr. Gladstone, cramped and deformed as it was by humiliating safeguards and unnecessary limitations, will dare to say that the principle of our movement is merely race hatred of England?

No! Last April Ireland was ready to forget and forgive. She was ready to sacrifice many things for peace, as long as the one essential principle for which she struggled was conceded. She was willing, on the day when the portals of her ancient senate-house were re-opened, to shake hands with her hereditary foe, and to proclaim peace between the democracies of two nations whom the Almighty placed side by side to be friends, but who had been kept apart by the

avarice, the passions, and the injustice of a few. What centuries of oppression had failed to do seemed about to be accomplished by one word of conciliation, by one act of justice.

Almost one hundred years before a similar opportunity arose. Wolfe Tone and the Society of United Irishmen demanded Catholic emancipation and Parliamentary reform, and in 1795 Lord Fitzwilliam came to Ireland to carry out a policy of justice. Then, just as last April, the Irish question was on the very brink of settlement. The passion of revenge died out, ancient wrongs were forgotten, faction faded at the approach of liberty, and for one brief moment the clouds lifted over Ireland. But the moment was brief.

Lord Fitzwilliam was recalled, and Lord Camden went to Ireland and deliberately commenced the policy which culminated in the rebellion of 1798. Fatally alike in almost all its details was the crisis of that day to the crisis of to-day. Once again the policy of conciliation has been cast aside by England. The English Viceroy who represented the policy of liberty, and who was the first English Viceroy since 1795 who was greeted with the acclamations of the populace in Dublin, has left our shores, and in his place has come one bearing the hated name of Castlereagh. Once again all thought of amity, with England has been banished from the minds of Irishmen, and to-day we are once more face to face with our hereditary foes. The storm cloud has descended once more upon our land, but we have a right to call on the world to remember, when by and by it perhaps shudders at the darkness and gloom and horror of the scene, how brightly and peacefully the Irish landscape smiled during the brief sunshine of the last few months.

The duty of the moment is clear. We have given

England the most convincing proof that on the concession of liberty we can be trusty friends ; it now remains for us to prove for the thousandth time that as slaves we can be formidable foes. I assert here to-day that the government of Ireland by England is an impossibility, and I believe it to be our duty to keep it so. Were our people tamely to submit to the yoke which has been once again placed on their necks they would be unworthy of the blood which they have inherited from fathers who preferred poverty to dishonour and death to national slavery.

But there is no danger of such a disgrace. The national movement is in the hands of a man who can be bold as well as cautious, and I claim the confidence and support of the Irish in America, not only because they are animated by the same principle and the same hopes as we are, but because our movement at home is conducted on a wise and honest policy. Judged by the test of success, how does that policy stand? Has our cause for one instant stopped in its progress toward triumph? When last you assembled in convention, two years ago, the Irish party in Parliament did not number more than forty ; to-day we hold five-sixths of the Irish seats, and speak in the name of five-sixths of the Irish people in Ireland. Two years ago we had arrayed against us all English political parties and every English statesman, to-day we have upon our side one of the great English political parties, which, though its past traditions in Ireland have been evil, still represents the party of progress in England, and the greatest statesman of the day who has staked his all upon winning for Ireland her national rights. Two years ago England had in truth, in Mitchel's phrase, the ear of the world. To-day, at last, that ear, so long poisoned with calumnies of our people, is now open to the voice of Ireland. Two years ago the public opinion of

the world—aye, and even of this free land of America—was doubtful as to the justice of our movement; to-day the opinion of the civilized world, and of America in particular, is clearly and distinctly upon our side. Has the policy which has wrought this change been a success, and are the men who have raised the Irish cause to its present position worthy of your continued confidence and support?

Well, but for the future, what is the policy and who are to be the framers of that policy? Here I come to the second point I mentioned at the beginning—namely, the condition upon which alone we can value your confidence or accept your support. So long as we are true to the great principles of Irish nationality, resolutely refusing either to be bought or coerced from a rigid adherence to the full measure of national right, and so long as we are able to point to our past policy as honest and successful, we say we, and no others, are entitled to decide for ourselves upon Irish soil and upon our own responsibility what our policy for the future is to be. This is the condition upon which you have given your support to us in the past, and it is the condition upon which alone we can accept your support for the future. Of one thing, however, you may rest assured—the policy in Ireland in the near future will be one of fight. The chief of the present English Government recently prescribed as a remedy for Irish discontent twenty years' coercion. He forgot the historical fact that since the Act of Union there had been eighty-six years' coercion, and that the spirit of the people is sterner and higher to-day than ever is was before. For coercion he was quite prepared, and to coercion Lord Salisbury will most assuredly be forced to come, although the policy of the new Government seems to be to try and stave off stern measures

for awhile. They will, however, soon find out their mistake.

To the concession of justice and liberty there is no alternative but coercion. To imagine that Ireland could jog along peacefully for even six months under the rule of the new Castlereagh is to set down our people as cravens or fools. In the coming winter the laws of nature itself will forbid the possibility of peace. For the last six months the tenant farmers of Ireland have played a part too little known and appreciated here. They submitted to untold privations and sufferings and exactions in patience and in silence, lest by one word or act of theirs they should embarrass their leaders in Parliament, or retard by one moment the concession of Home Rule. The landlords of Ireland noted, but totally misunderstood the meaning of the change of attitude. They mistook forbearance and patriotism for cowardice, and the crowbar brigade once more set to work. Still the tenants suffered in silence. Mr. Gladstone proposed a Land Bill which would have bought out the landlords at an extravagantly high figure, yet the Irish tenants were ready, because it was coupled with the concession of Home Rule, to pay this exorbitant sum as the price to be paid for national freedom. But all motive for forbearance on their part is now gone, the sands have run through the hour-glass, and the old fight between landlord and tenant must revive if the people are not to be swept out of existence while they are waiting for Home Rule.

Once more Irish landlords have behaved with unaccountable folly and stupidity. They have once more stood between Ireland and her freedom, and have refused even an extravagant price for the land because the offer was coupled with the concession of an Irish Parliament. So be it. I

believe the last offer has been made to Irish landlordism. The ultimate settlement of this question must now be reserved for the Parliament of Ireland, and meantime the people must take care to protect themselves and their children. In many parts of Ireland, I assert, rent is to-day an impossibility, and in every part of Ireland the rents demanded are exorbitant, and will not and cannot be paid. The old struggle will be revived, and before three months are over the new Government will be forced, as of old, in defence of the rents of the landlords, to attempt to forge anew the fetters of coercion. The process will not be an easy one, and even if successful, we have no reason to fear the worst they can do. For my part, indeed, I think it but right and fitting, that so long as Englishmen rule Ireland they should be forced to do so by coercion. We have to day no constitution, and it is well that the mask of constitutionalism should be torn from the faces of our rulers and the fact made patent to the world. In this coming struggle, which we honestly believe will be the final one before victory, we claim the assistance of our fellow-countrymen and the sympathy of all the citizens of this great Republic. Gentlemen, I have now done. The memory of this day will live with me while memory lasts. The effects of the work upon which you have been engaged will, I believe, live and be felt so long as this struggle continues. Your wisdom will guide our policy, your courage will inspire our hearts, your marvellous union will excite our emulation. You have good reason, indeed, to be proud of the proceedings of this day. You are, in truth, engaged in a noble and a sacred work—nothing less than championing the weak against the strong, the helpless against the powerful, the afflicted against the prosperous. You have long since earned for yourselves and your adopted country the blessings of the poor, and rest

assured when at last victory sits upon our cause and freedom is again enthroned in Ireland, you also will reap a reward, for the God of the poor and the oppressed, the God of justice and of mercy, will also increase your prosperity and watch eternally over your liberties.

THE COERCION ACT.

SPEECH FOR THE DEFENCE IN THE CASE OF Q. v. REDMOND,

TRIED AT FERNS, CO. WEXFORD, 6TH SEPTEMBER, 1888.

XII.

I INTEND to call no witnesses for the defence. The facts of the case are practically undisputed. The shorthand writer's report appears to be a fairly accurate one. I made the speech in question. I stand by every word of it, and it is for you to say whether or not in that speech I have violated the law. This being so, I think I will best consult my own self-respect and dignity by confining the remarks which I have to address to the Bench within the narrowest possible compass.

First of all, let me say, I don't intend to raise any legal questions here to-day, or to argue any complications of law whatever. If any such enter into this case you will forgive me for saying that I do not consider this the proper time to discuss them, or the proper tribunal to decide them. I am accused here of using intimidation towards Captain Walker in my speech at Scarawalsh. I utterly repudiate and deny that accusation, and I maintain that no fair or honest interpretation of my words can support it. No portion of my speech can, in my judgment, come within that definition.

During the entire of my public life, extending over ten years of stormy political strife, I have ever denounced

violence and crime of every kind, and have sought by the action of public opinion alone to stay the hand of oppression and to protect the people in their homes. In my speech at Scarawalsh my principle object was, if I could, to induce and persuade this landlord to act with leniency and justice to this particular tenant. I ask you do these words support a charge of intimidation?

I spoke as follows:—

“We have met here to-day for a very clear and definite reason; we have not met here to talk platitudes or generalities about the National cause, or the cause of the farmers; we are here to direct public attention to a particular instance of the way in which the tenants of Ireland have been impoverished by the land system and driven from their homes. We are here holding a meeting at the door of an evicted tenant to protest against eviction, and to make it perfectly plain to every man in the community that this evicted farm is to remain idle, and that so long as Clinch is kept out of the land, so long no farmer in the district will have hand, act, or part in working that land. Now, you may, and probably all of you know that I have always during my political career endeavoured to act and speak as a moderate man; I have always endeavoured before advocating any particular cause to find out that that was a good cause, and in no instance have I backed up a tenant merely because he was a tenant, if I thought that tenant was guilty of injustice and the landlord had not treated him unfairly. Therefore, I think it right to examine for a moment the facts of the case. I would not be here to-day were it not that I know this man Clinch has been under the form of law robbed of his property just as clearly and as certainly as Captain Walker met him on the roadside at night and took the money out of his pocket. What is the history of this

farm? I drove past it just now, and I could not help thinking that there appears a farm which is a credit to the whole countryside. I would challenge any part of Ireland to produce a more comfortable homestead or a better treated farm. If I am rightly informed, the Clinches have been in the possession of the farm—son and father, grandfather and great grandfather—for a hundred years, and that house there, every stone of it, was built by the father of the late tenant. I am informed that the land was planted by the mother and grandfather, that the drains and reclamations were done by them, and that, in fact, if the land to-day is worth £1 an acre, that something like 18s. an acre is the direct result of the industry and capital of the tenant and his forefathers. Now, that is the history of the farm in the past. What has happened recently? The tenant fell into arrears. He owed three years' rent—a rent considerably over the valuation, and that valuation, remember, being made on the improvements of his fathers—he owed three years' rent, and he has been evicted. Before his eviction, I am given to understand that an offer was made to him to sell his interest in the farm for a large sum, I believe £800 or £900. He refused to do it, and he may have been wise or unwise in so doing, but what I want to point out is that he had a property in the farm which was valued at the least at £800 or £900, and to-day by the action of law that property has been transferred from him into the pocket of the landlord, and the landlord has not vouchsafed to give him one penny compensation. I am told, indeed, that there was an offer made to the tenant; and what do you think the offer made to the tenant was—whose forefathers made the land what it is and built the houses—that offer was, that if he would give up the farm quietly, the landlord, if you please, would give him a present of £50 and the price of a

ticket to America. Yes, that is the spirit in which landlordism has acted in Ireland in the past; it endeavoured to clear the people out of the country, to send them to America, Australia—anywhere, so long as they cleared out of comfortable and snug farms like this, that they might be handed over to some of the landlord's friends when they were cleared out. Now, I deeply regret, speaking as a Wexfordman, as one well acquainted with the history of this county and the history of the different families of this county—I deeply regret that the landlord who has acted in this way is Captain Walker, and I tell you why. I am a very young man, but I remember when a boy hearing of Captain Walker's father—Charles Arthur Walker, Tykillen—as a good and humane man, who loved the people and was loved by them, and I feel the deepest regret and humiliation, as a Wexfordman to-day, to think the son of a man who has inherited from him traditions he ought to be proud of should stoop to such means and treat a tenant as Captain Walker has treated this man. Now, I ask, is there any way in which this wretched position in which Captain Walker has placed himself, could be put an end to, with honour to the tenant and credit to the landlord? I say there is. The tenant was a leaseholder and debarred under the Land Act; he is willing now, if the landlord reinstates him, to go into the Land Courts, and have his rent fixed on the condition that the arrears of rent due by him should be calculated on the basis of the new rent. Is that, I ask, a fair and honest offer; and if it is, let Captain Walker take the responsibility of refusing it. He is willing to do more than that—there are other tenants on the property here who are much in the same position as Clinch, but the landlord has treated them differently; they did not prominently identify themselves as he had with certain elections and other matters of public

interest here. They who observed and maintained a subservient and humble front to their landlord have been treated differently—not only have they not been evicted, but the rents were received from them in any instalments they could pay, and an offer has actually been made to them to purchase their land under Lord Ashbourne's Act. I know nothing of the terms of that offer, and consequently cannot say anything on the point. Whether it ought to be accepted by the tenants or not, but I ask if there was any offer made to Clinch, and if not, why not? And to-day up to the last minute, will Captain Walker take the responsibility of refusing to Clinch the same measure of justice he is willing to extend to the other tenants. Now, I mentioned two courses open to Captain Walker, because, as I have said before, I would wish to see this dispute settled, if not for the sake of Captain Walker, at any rate for the sake of the memory of his father, who, during a long life, was never hostile to the wishes, the feelings or the interests of the people of this county. But there is something more to be said, and it is this:—

“If Captain Walker is determined on fighting this man, he will very soon find out that in fighting him he is fighting the people of this county. Captain Walker is a resident landlord, and a sportsman, and he could not afford to have arrayed against him the united hostility of the entire people amongst whom he lives, and I say if the matter is fought out to the end, why, then, the people will stand by Clinch, and Captain Walker will find before the fight is over that not only has he got no tenant for this land—God forbid any man in the county should be wicked enough or mad enough to lay hands on the land from which Clinch has been evicted—but he will find more than that—the injustice done to this man will confront him wherever he goes and wherever he puts

his foot. Until the injustice is remedied, he will find nothing in the county except the hostility of men who resent injustice. I will say no more about Clinch, but I hope what I have said will reach the landlord. Whether it does or not, I am sure of this, that what I have said will reach the people. Clinch's is not the only case of oppression in this district. There are other cases besides Clinch's, and I am glad and proud to know that in those several cases of evicted farms the land is left idle on the hands of the landlords, as I saw myself coming along the road the weeds and thistles are springing up on the evicted farms, as witness of the fact that the landlords, by injustice, have doomed the land to sterility."

Gentlemen, in making this speech I was exercising my constitutional right of addressing my constituents. I was not there as a stranger or as an adventurer without right or title to address the people. On the contrary I was there in fulfilment of a grave and imperative duty. I am connected with this county by the strongest ties. I am a Wexfordman myself, bound to the county by ties of parentage and property. For half a century my family have been connected with the Parliamentary representation of Wexford, and I, myself, am the elected representative of the people.

When speaking at Scarawalsh I spoke with a grave sense of my responsibility, and I have no desire to-day to shirk or to shrink from the consequence of my words. If amongst these consequences should be a term of imprisonment for me I shall bear it with a cheerful mind and the easy conscience of a man who knows that he has honestly fulfilled his duty. But if I am to be imprisoned, let everyone clearly understand my offence. Let no one be deceived by the claptrap of those who assert that my offence is an offence under the ordinary law. That is one of those half

truths which are worse than falsehoods. Intimidation is, of course, an offence under the ordinary law, but I could not be found guilty of it without the approval of a jury of my countrymen indifferently chosen, and I venture to assert without fear of contradiction, that on the evidence of my speech at Scarawalsh no jury in Ireland or in Great Britain could be found to convict me. No, I am not being tried under the ordinary law. I am being tried under an exceptional and oppressive Act of Parliament, which outrages the fundamental principles of the Constitution, and robs me of my primary right as the citizen of a free country—namely, my right of trial by a jury of my countrymen indifferently chosen. I am being tried before a tribunal of deputies of the Executive Government, who though they combine the functions of judge and jury, ~~or~~ ^{are} neither indifferently chosen as jurymen nor independent of the Executive as judges.

Condemnation by such a tribunal will have no moral weight or authority behind it, and will be to me not a reproach but an honour.

Gentlemen, I have now finished. I invite you to proceed to deliver judgment. For my part I can only say I am quite prepared if need be to go to prison proudly in a cause in which far better men than I have in the past sacrificed liberty and life. In my case the rigours of prison life will be sweetened by the consciousness that what I am being punished for was done in the interest of my constituents, and in the spirit and faithful discharge of my duty to them, and, above all, by the consciousness that I will bring with me to my prison cell the confidence of the entire people of this country, almost without exception, and the good-will of the friends of Ireland throughout the world.

THE COERCION ACT.

SPEECH FOR THE DEFENCE IN CASE OF *Q. v. DILLON AND OTHERS*,
TRIED AT TIPPERARY, 16TH NOVEMBER, 1890.

XIII.

I RISE, in the discharge of my duty to my clients, to state to the Court the defence which they intend to offer to the grave and extraordinary charge which has been preferred against them. I rise with feelings of the profoundest diffidence and distrust in my own powers to do justice to their case, and I cannot help saying how deeply I feel the misfortune which has deprived the defendants, at such a critical period of their case, of the services of my learned friend, Mr. Healy. His enforced absence has been to me a source of difficulty and embarrassment, but to his clients it has been nothing short of a calamity—how heavy a calamity no one feels more accurately than I do, in rising now to open the case for the defence.

I appear here on behalf of Mr. Michael O'Brien Dalton and Mr. Daniel Kelly. Neither of these gentlemen are public men. They are both Tipperarymen, and both ex-tenants of Mr. Smith-Barry, and, I may be allowed, perhaps, to say, that while I would esteem it an honour to appear here in defence of those of the traversers who are colleagues of mine in the House of Commons, I esteem it a still greater honour to speak here on behalf of these two gallant

Tipperarymen, who, I think, I will be able to show you before I sit down, so far from having been guilty of any crime or any dishonourable act, have earned for themselves the eternal gratitude of their country, by a deed as pure, as unselfish, and heroic, as any to be found in the annals of any country in the world.

Gentlemen, this is no ordinary case. It is nothing short of a great State trial, and a State trial held under conditions so novel, and of a nature so extraordinary, as to be absolutely without a parallel in the history of our country. That history—bloodstained and disgraceful to our rulers as it has been—affords many instances of tyrannical and oppressive proceedings against the liberties of the people, also innumerable examples of State trials, in which the most honoured of our race have been persecuted and punished as malefactors and criminals, but a more iniquitous proceeding than the trial in this Court of a great case of alleged conspiracy is not to be found, I believe, in the whole history of British misrule in Ireland.

You are here sitting in the double capacity of judge and jury trying a case of criminal conspiracy; you are here administering that portion of the criminal law which is most inconsistent with the liberty which, according to the theory of the constitution under which we are supposed to live, is the birthright of every subject of the Crown. The law of criminal conspiracy has at all times been the cherished instrument of oppression. Times out of mind it has, both in England and Ireland, been used to oppress the liberties of the people. It has been described by a great English jurist, as so wide-reaching in its effect, as to make it hazardous, under certain conditions, for any man to perform the most ordinary duties of life. It violates the fundamental

principle of English law, which is, that no man shall be criminally responsible save for his own acts. The doctrine of criminal conspiracy has, of late years, been pushed to such a dangerous extent, as to include the combination of two or more persons to do any act which the judges may hold to be morally wrong or socially or politically inexpedient. The very existence of such a law would be absolutely destructive of the liberties of us all, were it not that the Constitution provides a safeguard against its wanton or oppressive application, by interposing between the subject and the Crown the verdict of a jury. In this country that safeguard has, for the present, been withdrawn; but I am bound to confess that I do not believe that the Legislature which passed the statute under which you are sitting here, ever, for one instant, contemplated the trial of such a case as this before a tribunal of this kind.

This case has lasted thirty days. Ninety witnesses have been examined. The most difficult questions of fact, the nicest questions of law, have arisen. The charge is of a vague and indefinite character. The evidence is of the most complicated nature, covering the thoughts, words, and deeds, not only of the defendants, but of countless persons, known and unknown, covering a period of nearly two years; and I say again, a more monstrous proceeding was never heard of than to send such a case for trial to a tribunal consisting of two gentlemen who combine in their own persons the functions of judge and of jury, but who, as jurymen, are not indifferently chosen between the Crown and the accused, and, as judges, are not independent of the Executive, which is here the prosecutor.

What has been the method of this prosecution? I have said the evidence extended over nearly two years. What is the explanation of this delay in preferring this charge?

Though, during these months, the Government have been watching the growth and progress of this alleged conspiracy, yet they took no steps to arrest it. They had their short-hand notes of the speeches which they ask you to hold were criminal speeches; but they took no step. They had week by week the issues of the papers in their possession which they now allege contained illegal matter, but they never stirred. They had their reports from their spies and shadows, informing them, day by day for sixteen months, of the public and private acts of the defendants which they now ask you to hold were criminal acts, but they gave no sign. They lay in wait. They watched with tender care the growth for a year and a-half of this conspiracy. They preferred no charge against the defendants, and I say here their object was perfectly plain. They dared not prosecute the editors for what their papers contained, for they had not violated the law. They dared not prosecute the Members of Parliament for their speeches, for those speeches were neither seditious nor illegal. They dared not challenge any single act of any one of the defendants, for those acts were lawful; but they occupied themselves for sixteen months in spreading their conspiracy net, in the hope that by showing combination they could make legal acts illegal, relying on the newspapers to convict the Members of Parliament, and the speeches of the Members of Parliament to convict the editors.

What is the object which the Crown had in view in instituting this prosecution? I may be told their object was to vindicate the law, and to bring criminals to justice. This is my answer—If the newspaper editors violated the law, why, for sixteen months, did they not prosecute them? If the speeches delivered by the defendants were illegal, why did they not prosecute the speakers? If the meetings held

were unlawful, why were not those who organised or attended them brought before the bar of justice? The Crown, by their inaction for sixteen months, admit the legality of these things taken separately, but they now, having sedulously collected all these innocent acts into one, ask you, under the pretence of conspiracy, to hold them to be criminal, and to regard each one of the defendants as responsible for the words and acts of all the others, and mark you, not merely for the words and acts of their co-defendants, but for the doings of those numerous persons, unknown, whose deeds have formed, by far, the greater portion of the Crown cases. Is their object to break down the combination of the Smith-Barry tenants? If so, they are attempting, as I will show you, to use the criminal law, and to use you merely as a political instrument; and they have entered on a course of incredible folly, doomed to certain and disgraceful failure. Are they solicitous for the peace of this town of Tipperary, and anxious to allay the bitterness of feeling which exists here? If so, a more unfortunate expedient never was adopted than to endeavour to conciliate the people by victimising their most honoured and trusted leaders.

The defendants here are charged with having conspired for the purpose of intimidating the tenants of Mr. Smith Barry. I do not for one instant mean to deny, what indeed is a matter of notoriety all over the civilised world, that there is in existence at this moment in Tipperary, amongst Mr. Smith-Barry's tenants, a vast and formidable combination. To deny this would not only be folly but would be a betrayal of my duty to my clients. My case will be the exact reverse. My clients admit that combination, and my duty to-day is to justify and to vindicate it, and, heavy though the penalty is which this trial must entail upon the

defendants, no matter what your decision may be, I, for one, rejoice at the opportunity which this prosecution affords, of refuting the calumnies which unscrupulous political opponents have for so long a time been levelling against the fair fame of Tipperary, and of letting the world know the true merits of the great struggle which is here proceeding, and upon which side are truth, justice, and honour.

I propose to prove to you in the defence which we will lay before you, that the combination of the Smith-Barry tenants has been, and is an honourable, peaceful, and legal one. Let me without further preface come to the facts.

Was this combination an honourable one? The key-note to the combination is contained in the memorial which, in June, 1889, Smith-Barry's tenants presented to their landlord. This is already in evidence, and is as follows :—

“ TO ARTHUR HUGH SMITH-BARRY, ESQ., M.P.

“ SIR,—We, the undersigned tenants on your Tipperary estate, have learned with alarm and indignation, that you have placed yourself at the head of a landlord confederacy for the purpose of clearing the Ponsonby estate of its tenantry, and that your agent, Mr. Horace Townsend, has become the agent also of this unjust and inhuman project. We deplore your interference in a struggle which, but for you, was on the point of being amicably settled. We repudiate the right of any body of speculators, whether for the purposes of gain or of political capital, to purchase over the heads of the tenantry, while a settlement was imminent. We are informed that the tenants were and are willing to submit their claims to any court of arbitration, and that your agent, Mr. Horace Townsend, himself, acknowledges the excessive character of the rental of the Ponsonby estate. We have read with horror the sufferings that have been caused to a poor and overburdened tenantry by the evictions already executed by the syndicate of which you are the principal. We declare that proceedings so unjust and revolting to human feeling are calculated to prejudice and inflame the worst antagonism between landlord and tenant, and cannot fail to produce a counter combination for the tenants' protection, to which we would feel ourselves forced by every feeling of humanity and self-

protection to adhere. We would, therefore, earnestly urge you, in the interest of tranquillity upon this hitherto peaceful estate, to relinquish the work of extermination on the Ponsonby estate, and withdraw from a syndicate which is a menace to the security of the tenant-farmers of Ireland, and a direct incentive to ill-will and disturbance in the community.”

That memorial was adopted at a meeting of the tenants held in Tipperary on the 23rd June, 1889, and reported in *United Ireland* of 29th June. At that meeting Mr. William O’Brien made the following speech:—

MR. SMITH-BARRY.

“I need hardly tell you I have not come here to-day for the purpose of receiving a complimentary address, kind as you are. I have come here for a different object. You and I have assembled here to do a certain thing. It is, in the first place, absolutely legal—that is to say, if there is a single rag of legality left for the protection of the Irish people. Mr. Smith-Barry claimed in the House of Commons on Friday night the right to combine with the landlords of other counties for the extermination of a body of rack-rented tenantry with whom he had no connection whatever, and no business to meddle. Very well. If he claims that right, I ask you, the Tipperary tenantry of Smith-Barry, that you shall claim the right in the same manner to combine with the tenants of other counties to save them from destruction. Your right of combination is immeasurably stronger than his.

THE AGGRESSOR.

“Remember this, that he is the aggressor—the wicked and wanton aggressor—in the whole transaction. He had peace and quietness here on his own estate in Tipperary. A voice—Too much of it. Aye, possibly, he had too much of it, for he has not been content with it. On the contrary, he has abused your patience. He has taken advantage of the peacefulness of his own estate in Tipperary, and he and his agent have gone around London to organise a conspiracy of English speculators to exterminate a body of tenantry who never injured him. Their calculation is that they can bribe Tipperary to stand quietly by while they harass Cork, and by and by that they can bribe Cork to stand by while they are crushing Tipperary. Well, these are not the first men who have trespassed too far on the patience and good will of the people of Tipperary.

COMBINATION.

"The unity of the Irish race in our time is not bounded by parishes or by counties. The Irish cause does not stop at the Galtee mountains. If the landlords of Cork and Tipperary can combine for hate, then, I say, the tenants of Cork and Tipperary can combine for love. They can, and I promise they will combine to warn Mr. Smith-Barry and Mr. Horace Townsend that if they are determined to create desolate homes on the Ponsonby estate in Cork, their tenants may possibly be driven to leave them a desolate rent-office of their own in Tipperary. Remember, again, that this man is a most wicked aggressor in this whole business. First he has left you no alternative except to take sides either with him or against him. If you were to stand inactively by here while he and his agent were using your money to perpetrate this abominable wrong upon your brother tenants in Cork, well, all I can say is, you are as much his accomplices as if you enlisted as his emergency-men and took up the crowbar against your neighbours' homes. It is the case of the Ponsonby tenants to-day; it may be your own case to-morrow, if once the landlords get it into their heads that the tenantry of one county can be bribed to look on mutely while they are destroying the tenantry of a neighbouring county."

And the following resolution was adopted:—

"Dr. O'Ryan proposed—'That we, the tenantry on Mr. Smith-Barry's Tipperary Estate, have learned with indignation that Mr. Smith-Barry and his agent, Mr. Horace Townsend, had put themselves at the head of a secret landlord organisation who are engaged in exterminating the rack-rented tenantry on the Ponsonby estate; that we condemn the wicked and unprovoked interference of Mr. Smith-Barry and Mr. Horace Townsend upon an estate with which they had no concern, which interference had the effect of destroying a settlement actually arrived at between Mr. Ponsonby and his tenants, and exposing 400 tenants to the destruction of their homes and confiscation of their property, in consequence of their inability to pay rack-rents, which they were willing to have submitted to the judgment of any independent tribunal; that steps be taken forthwith to appoint a delegation to wait upon Mr. Smith-Barry and Mr. Townsend, in the name of the Tipperary tenantry, to represent with what horror their action has been received in Tipperary, and to demand their withdrawal from the landlord conspiracy against the Ponsonby tenants, said delegation to report the result of their interview to a convention of Mr. Smith-Barry's Tipperary tenants.' Mr. John Cadogan seconded the resolution."

Gentlemen, the Ponsonby estate to which reference is thus made, is situate in the County of Cork, and was the property of a retired naval officer, Mr. Talbot Ponsonby. It was a rack-rented and a poor estate. A dispute arose between the tenants and their landlord in the year 1886, and after passing through a number of phases, which it is unnecessary for me to deal with, it at last, owing to the negotiations of Canon Keller, the Parish Priest of Youghal, and Mr. Brunker, an agent of Mr. Ponsonby, was on the very brink of settlement. The tenants proposed to buy their holdings, and the landlord consented to sell to them. The tenants offered £106,000 for the estate, and the landlord at first asked £127,000, which sum he finally reduced to £110,000. Thus, the amount in dispute was a small one, and Mr. Brunker, who acted for Mr. Ponsonby, declared it to be his opinion that with some modifications the tenants' offer was a fair one, and would be recommended by him. It was at this moment Mr. Smith-Barry interfered. It was no concern of his; but, out of pure wantonness, he stepped in between the landlord and the tenants, and in the name of a syndicate of English capitalists he bought the estate from Mr. Ponsonby over the heads of the tenants. Then commenced on this unfortunate estate a war of vengeance and extermination. There were between 300 and 400 families on the property. Every one of these families has been evicted, and their houses levelled to the ground; 10,000 acres of land have been laid waste, and are to-day rapidly going back to bog moor and waste. This is the direct handiwork of Mr. Smith-Barry. In vain the tenants asked for arbitration. Vengeance, and not justice, was what was required. A generous and philanthropic Irishman, Sir John Arnott, attempted to settle the matter by buying back the estate from the syndicate at the land-

lord's own price, offering to pay out of his own pocket a princely sum to enable the tenants to go back to their homes ; but Mr. Smith-Barry frustrated his noble intention by demanding £25,000 more for the estate now, with its weed-choked fields and ruined homesteads, than was asked by Mr. Ponsonby two years ago, before a single tenant had been evicted. Now, Mr. Smith-Barry, who thus interfered with other people's business, was himself an Irish landlord. He possessed here in this lovely Tipperary vale a large and valuable estate. He owned the greater part of this town. His tenants were steady, industrious, and enterprising men. They created this thriving town. They found in Mr. Smith-Barry an avaricious and grinding landlord. I noticed, that of the tenants called as witnesses for the Crown, not a single one could be found to contradict the statement made by the informer, Sadlier, that the tenants on this estate were rank-rented and oppressed. Still the soil was kind ; they were prosperous, and, for the sake of peace, they paid their rack-rents regularly, until they were rudely startled from their lethargy by the story of the Ponsonby estate, and learned that the man responsible for the devastation of 400 homes in Cork was the same man whose rack-rents they had been paying without a murmur for so long.

Then it was that they determined to combine, not for their own rights, but for the protection of their brother tenants in the County Cork. Was that a dishonourable motive ? I assert here, it is a motive so honourable and noble as to go far of itself to justify the entire movement. But it is asserted the combination was unjust because it withheld Mr. Smith-Barry's rents. This is another gross calumny. What the combination did was to determine that, unless their landlord desisted from his devil's work on the Ponsonby estate, the relation of landlord and tenant

between them should cease. They owed half a year's rent, but they, in payment of that debt, allowed their entire property in their holdings to go to Smith-Barry. Property valued, according to the evidence of the sub-sheriff, a hostile witness, as fifty, aye, a hundred times the amount of rent due, was surrendered by these tenants, and the man who, in the face of these facts, speaks of dishonesty or injustice in the same breadth as the Tipperary combination, is guilty of uttering the blackest and foulest calumny.

Men have called this action of the tenants insane. 'There never was a great act of unselfishness done in the world's history which the prudent and worldly wise of that day did not disparage as rashness or insanity. Horatius, who held the bridge in the brave days of old, risked life and limb in the enterprise, and was a rash and foolhardy man. The three hundred who died at Thermopolæ would have been more prudent had they quietly given up their arms when asked from them, and sued for pardon like reasonable men. The Russians who burned Moscow, sooner than allow it to shelter their country's enemies, must have sacrificed a great deal of valuable property and "interfered sadly with the trade of a thriving town." They were foolish because they were unselfish, but their unselfishness was glorious, and their heroism is written in letters of gold upon the page of history. So I say also of this Tipperary combination. These men have risked all that makes life sweetest—their homes, the welfare and comfort of their children, their prospects, their means of livelihood—in defence of the poor, the weak and the oppressed, for the cause of the tenant-farmers, and the honour of Ireland, and for my part, I regard with feelings of absolute reverence the poorest and humblest man who, for such a motive, entered such a combination; and I shall cherish as long as I live,

as one of my most valued treasures, the memory of having had the privilege of appearing here as counsel in this case for my friend, Michael O'Brien Dalton, and my friend Daniel Kelly.

I think I have now said enough to show why it is I assert that the combination is an honourable combination. I will now pass on to my second statement. I assert that the combination is not only honourable, but that it has been peaceful in its workings. There is no part of the case I am more anxious and ready to deal with than this. Calumnies of the grossest kind have been uttered, both in court and out of it, in reference to that matter. It has been asserted that the movement has been worked through outrage, crime and intimidation. I have a report of the oration of my learned friend, Mr. Ronan, at the opening of the case, and, if incorrect, Mr. Ronan can contradict the extract I am going to read from it:—

“Having said that the combination was unlawful, he (Mr. Ronan) intended to establish as clear as the sun in broad noonday, that the conspiracy was carried out by coercion, intimidation, boycotting, and outrage.”

I state that in the evidence which Mr. Ronan produced in sustainment of that statement it has been shown that that statement was a gross calumny upon the people of Tipperary. Consider for a moment what the movement was. It lasted sixteen months. It consisted in practically a state of social war in that district. What happened in the town of Tipperary alone? The sub-sheriff stated that he himself had personally superintended no less than 176 evictions in the town and its immediate neighbourhood. Could you in any country in the world put your finger upon any great social movement of that kind which had

been so absolutely free from bloodshed, or disorder, or violence or outrage? It has lasted sixteen months. During that time the whole population of Tipperary was arrayed upon the side of the Smith-Barry tenants, and on the other side there were the policemen, some emergency-men, and a few other individuals, who, as hangers-on of the landlord's cause, were unpopular with the people, and during those sixteen months of struggle how many lives were lost? One life; the life of a poor boy, fourteen years of age, shot in cold blood in the streets of Tipperary by the police. During those sixteen months how many persons were seriously wounded? Three; the boy who was shot dead and two other boys, ten and twelve years old, also shot in the streets of Tipperary by the police.

On the other side, how many police were seriously wounded during the whole of the struggle in Tipperary? Not a single man. How many police were off duty in consequence of any injury received, or who received medical advice? Not a single man. Some evidence was given of the outrages and violence committed by the people on the police, and what did it come to? One policeman—it is horrible to have to relate it—received a blow of a stone on his ankle, and had to fall out of the ranks for ten minutes. Another policeman received a blow of a stone on the thigh, and his officer did not think it necessary for him to go off duty, and when he saw the doctor in the morning the doctor laughed at him. Another policeman had a very narrow escape. He deposed—amid the awe-stricken silence of the Court—that his pipe was broken in his mouth. These were the outrages committed on one side which were to balance the account of the boy shot dead and the two other boys shot in the streets of Tipperary. In speaking of serious injury done to the police I ought not to confine it to them. Has there been a single

instance of any civilian on the other side been seriously injured? Not a single one, and I assert that, so far as injuries to life and limb were concerned, the statement that this movement has been worked by outrage is a gross and wicked fabrication. But it may be said that the injuries were to property. Were they? I will not speak of the injury done to the properties of these tenants. I will not speak of Mr. O'Brien Dalton's mill battered down after eviction out of pure wantonness, while Mr. Arnold Power, whose work was done, remained as a disinterested spectator to smoke a friendly cigar and witness the work of the battering ram. I will not speak of these things, but let me ask, on the other side what injury has been done to property? Some windows were broken. In sixteen months a few panes of glass were broken in Tipperary. English people who never heard of a window being broken in their country in the course of a street row, will be horrified to hear of the conduct of a Tipperary mob who, in the course of sixteen months, broke a few panes of glass; a calico window blind, price one shilling, was set fire to and burned; and, worse than this, an ass's cartload of straw was set fire to on the street. There was the sum total of the outrages to property during these sixteen months. But let me go a step further now. The great case has been the case of the explosion. The three kingdoms have been ringing with the story of this Nihilism, started into life under the banner of the tenants' combination in Tipperary town. Tipperary up to that time had been a peaceful town, but under the shadow of this evil combination of the Smith-Barry tenantry a system of Nihilism sprang up, infernal machines were placed in houses, and every kind of explosive was used to ruin the property and destroy the lives of certain people. That is the accusation, and when you come to examine the evidence

upon what does it rest? Now, there were three things with reference to these explosions that on the face of the evidence are incontrovertible. We have had evidence of very few explosions, and in all that were asserted to have taken place not one single human being received so much as a scratch on the top of his little finger. That fact was number one, which is incontrovertible on the evidence. Now, fact number two. With the exception of the breaking of a fanlight at Godfrey's, and with the exception of setting fire to a sixpenny calico blind at the rent office, there has been no injury to property done by these explosives. There are two facts, and they did not stand alone, which of themselves dispose absolutely of this wicked and absurd calumny, that this work has been carried on by a species of Nihilism in Tipperary. But what was the third fact, which absolutely disposed, once and for all, of this talk, and the attempt made to hold the defendants and the Smith-Barry tenants responsible for these explosions.

We had a number of interesting police witnesses, but the most interesting of all was ex-Sergeant Culleton. Culleton had been twenty-nine years stationed in Tipperary, and during the whole of that time he told us that it had been the custom of the people of Tipperary occasionally, at all times of public commotion, rejoicing, or excitement, to let off gunpowder on the streets—a most mischievous practice, which every reasonable man would put down as a most mischievous practice, just as we all condemned the firing of squibs and the burning of effigies of the Pope on Guy Fawkes' Day in England. But what is the important part of Sergeant Culleton's evidence? It is, that it gives the lie direct to the statement that this letting off of explosives is the result of the Smith-Barry tenants' combination. It has been the mischievous custom of the people of

the town of Tipperary for the whole of the twenty-nine years that Sergeant Culleton was on duty there, and he said more than that, because during the whole of these twenty-nine years, including the sixteen months of "horrible outrage and crime," he never as much as heard of a single individual being hurt or scratched by an explosion, and, except for a few panes of glass and a sixpenny blind, he never during the twenty-nine years heard of even a shilling's worth of injury having been done to property by explosions. Now, there are three incontrovertible facts. First, no one was injured; secondly, no injury was done to property; and thirdly, this practice was twenty-nine years old, and during the whole of that time had never called forth the righteous indignation of the upholders of law and order until they found it convenient to use these petty explosions as a means of blackening the character of political opponents, and blackening the cause of the Smith-Barry tenants. I find that some evidence was given about nine of these explosions. One of the nine was not proved, but evidence was given which pointed to the possibility of an explosion having taken place—the one about Fitzgerald. But in eight instances it was proved that explosions of some sort had taken place. The explosion in the rent office had the result of setting fire to this blind. That was the amount of injury it did, and I have no doubt it startled the old woman who was in the house. The next explosion was the one in the bridewell, and the evidence showed that it was of such a deadly character that it exploded within two feet of the bridewell keeper, and did not scratch, or hurt, or touch him. It was a little bit of iron pipe, five inches long, and an inch across, and only one piece exploded out of it, and although it exploded in a little yard there was not a single mark on any of the walls which went around the yard, and the two

pieces were found lying four yards apart, and neither of them scratched the wall, which gives a fair idea of the deadly nature of the explosives.

Then as to the next case. The evidence is, that in the vicinity of Hanrahan's a kettle was found full of powder. What I have got to point out in reference to this case is this—admittedly it was found twenty or thirty yards from Hanrahan's house on the far side of a wall six feet six inches high. Whoever placed it there might have been bent on mischief or on making a noise, but one thing was clear, and that was that they could not have been bent upon any injury to life or limb or property. Then we have the explosion at Godfrey's. I took occasion to look at Godfrey's fanlight myself. It is still kept there in its broken condition, I suppose as a sign and token of what took place. We have in evidence the dimension of this fanlight, and it was not all blown out, two pieces of it still remained. According to the evidence, a little jar, as near as possible the size of a sixpenny ink jar, was filled with powder and placed on the window sill, and it went off with a "terrible report." That was the case for the Crown.

A policeman picked up the fragments of this jar, and in answer to me, he admitted that he examined the jamb of the door and the frame of the fanlight, and he said he found indentations made by the flying portions of the jar; but on being questioned, he admitted that these indentations amounted merely to scratches of the paint, and there we have indication of the terrible force and deadly character of this explosion—the pieces flying apart with such force and deadly power that they absolutely succeeded in scratching the paint on the door. There was a matter about Godfrey's explosion that I regret I have to allude to. I would be the last person in the world to make an accusation or an insinu-

ation without reason for doing it, and, consequently, I will simply point to the fact to which I am about to allude, and will not found any accusation at all upon it except against the Crown. It was proved that this explosion at Godfrey's was heard by a policeman at a considerable distance in another street. He heard it in the direction of Godfrey's, and came down into Godfrey's street and found nobody there. He then went up, and another policeman came, and they collected these fragments and made an examination. Now, this constable admitted in cross-examination that there had been a Constable Boyle on duty in that street watching that house that very night. Where is Constable Boyle? Constable Boyle, if he was fulfilling his duty, was watching that house at the very time the explosion took place; but when the other policeman came up to the house, Constable Boyle was not there. I waited day after day for three weeks for the production of Constable Boyle, but he was not produced, and his absence was not explained, and in view of the circumstances attending Constable Palmer's case, to which I shall have to allude in a moment, without making any accusation, I say the absence of explanation of Constable Boyle's movements at that time is sufficient to throw grave suspicion on the genuineness of the whole transaction, and grave suspicion on the case of the Crown.

I need not go at any great length into the cases of the other explosions. Evidence was given by William Sadlier, that three dreadful "bombs" were thrown at him and two friends on the road, but though the bombs burst at their feet they sustained not a scratch or injury, and when looked for not a fragment of the burst bombs could anywhere be found.

Now, I wish to call special attention to an extraordinary statement made by Mr. Ronan in his opening speech. Mr. Ronan stated that on the 25th of July a bomb was burst at

the window in Mr. Duggan's house at which Mrs. Duggan and her nine children were sitting. Now there is not a shred of foundation for that statement. What are the facts? A policeman was on duty at the house, and he saw something thrown in the direction of the house that fell on the pavement about two yards from the door, which was closed, and exploded, and that explosion, the constable admitted, made no mark whatever on the door or on the house. The bomb was picked up, and what did this deadly weapon consist of? It was the cock of a beer barrel, and it was open to argument whether the thing had burst at all, but, whether it did or not, there was absolutely no foundation whatever for Mr. Ronan's story of the bomb having been thrown at the windows at which Mrs. Duggan and her nine children were sitting. What an extreme man Mr. Ronan is. A wife and family would not be sufficient. No, it should be a wife and nine children. That story is on a par with all the other stories which had been imported into this case for the purpose of blackening the character of the defendants and their cause, and which were absolutely without foundation. But the most monstrous part of the accusation against the defendants is this—it was sought to make them responsible for every explosion of gunpowder that took place, for every stone thrown, and for every window broken.

The Crown had given evidence of a great many speeches that had been delivered, but he noticed that they did not give in evidence a speech which had been made on the 8th of September, immediately after the sale in Thurles, and after the window breaking and the shooting down of the boy by the police, at a meeting at which the defendants were, most of them present. It was a speech delivered by Mr. J. E. Redmond, M.P., in the course of which he said:—

“There were two plain and manifest duties which they were bound to fulfil towards these men. The first duty they owed to these men was to put down disorder in the town. He (Mr. Redmond) had read with pain of the breaking of windows and the throwing of stones. He was not afraid to speak his mind to Tipperarymen. He came from a county which had shown that when extreme measures were desirable it was prepared to take such measures. Stone-throwing and window-breaking were unworthy of Tipperary. It was a cowardly proceeding, and was bound to bring injury to the Smith-Barry tenantry, and the cause of Ireland generally. He asked them to put down disorder with a strong hand, and thus to deprive their enemies of the only weapon which they had to use against them—that is the weapon of misrepresenting their movement as a lawless, a turbulent, and an unjust one.”

The entire and absolute absence of violence and outrage of any kind which characterised the Tipperary struggle seems to me nothing short of marvellous. Just consider what the struggle meant. In this small town 176 evictions were carried out by the sheriff, and were carried out without a single act of violence. The sheriff himself admitted that no violence had been used to him, and, what was perhaps most extraordinary was the fact that Father Humphreys was present at the evictions, and the very fact that he had stood at some of the doors reading the *Freeman's Journal* whilst the evictions were taking place, was used in the case against him, although the absence of disturbance was manifestly due to his presence. Another matter to which I wish to refer is this. A series of outrages took place in Tipperary last June, and when the malefactor was caught by the people themselves redhanded in the act of breaking windows and breaking into houses, who did he turn out to be? Was he a Smith-Barry tenant? No! he was a member of the Royal Irish Constabulary—Constable Palmer. Well, the Crown proceeded against the constable in a leisurely fashion. They issued summonses against him,

but in the meantime Constable Palmer proceeded to Queens-town, openly purchased a ticket, openly went on board an American steamer, and disappeared out of the country. The proceedings went on in his absence, and his punishment was of a very terrible character, especially as he was safe out of Ireland. He was fined £3. What I would like to know would be the fate of a Tipperary peasant if he had been found guilty of the same offence? If Constable Palmer had not been caught breaking into the house, these outrages of the constable would have been brought up in evidence against the defendants here, for you are asked in reference to the acts alleged to say that at least if the defendants did not do them themselves, still that they were responsible in law and in justice for them. Now, I do not go very far, I think, when I ask the Court to say that the fact that a policeman was caught doing these things ought to some extent aid in negating the presumption that every window broken in Tipperary was broken with the approval or under the orders of the defendants in this case. In this regard I wish for a moment to revert to Constable Boyle. An explosion took place at Godfrey's. Constable Boyle was on duty at the house, and it was his duty to catch the perpetrators of it. But why was not Constable Boyle produced? So far as that was concerned, Constable Boyle is *non est*, and for all we know he, too, might have taken a ticket for New York, and yet though this policeman is thus mysteriously absent, the Court is asked to hold the defendants responsible for the explosion at Godfrey's, just as you would have been asked to hold them responsible for outrages committed by Palmer if Palmer had not been caught by the people.

Turning now to another branch of the case, I ask the Court to say that the combination in this case is not only an honourable and a peaceful combination, as it appeared

on the evidence, but also a perfectly legal combination. If the combination in Tipperary was, as I contend it was, a perfectly free and voluntary combination entered into by the Smith-Barry tenants for the purpose of putting an end to the relation of landlord and tenant between them and their landlord, and if the combination was carried out by legal means, then I tell the Court, and I defy anyone to controvert my assertion, that it was a perfectly legal combination. Remember this, that if the desire to punish Smith-Barry, or to injure Smith-Barry, were proved to be the primary object of this combination, still that would not be sufficient of itself to make this combination illegal. The Crown, however, said, and undertook to prove, that this was a combination entered into for the purpose of coercing the Smith-Barry tenants. Now, I admit there is a combination in existence, but I assert that it is a combination of an entirely different character. On the question of this being a free and voluntary combination I will read another extract from a speech delivered by the same gentleman whom I previously quoted, at the same critical period of this struggle, just after the Thurles sales, and after the smashing of the windows, on which the Crown so much relied. The gentleman referred to spoke as follows :—

“The night before the sales in Thurles he was asked to enter into consultation with tenants. He met the tenants, and what he then said to the tenants in private he was ready to say to them in public. He told them they were entering into a very grave phase in the situation. He told them they were about to face probable sacrifice and suffering. He told them they should act upon their own responsibility and in accordance with the dictates of their own consciences ; and he told them, though he spoke not for himself, but for Mr. Parnell, still he for his part would not take the responsibility of coercing or inducing, or even advising, any man on that estate to take any course which

he did not approve of in his heart and conscience, and which he was not bound as an honest and honourable man to take. He gave the tenants absolutely no advice. So far from persuading—he believed many of them were now present, and knew what he spoke was true—so far from persuading them, he believed the effects of his words must be to turn the tenants, if that were possible, from the manly course they were resolved upon. He stated that, because the action they did take on this occasion redounded all the more to their honour and courage. They acted upon their own responsibility. Not one advised them or persuaded them, and, acting upon their own responsibility, some of the richest and most substantial tenants upon that Smith-Barry estate allowed their valuable property to be sold out for a song to the landlord."

It has been proved, no doubt, that a number of persons have been boycotted in Tipperary in the sense of their trade having left them. On that matter I have got very little to say. The legal right of every member of the public to deal with whom he pleased, and to refuse to deal with whom he pleased, could not be controverted. Take the case of the Smith-Barry struggle, in which the vast and overwhelming preponderance of public opinion was in favour of the action taken by the tenants, and take a shopkeeper in Tipperary enjoying the favour and the patronage of the public through whom, perhaps, he was making a fortune—take such a man committing some act which left the public to believe that he had betrayed the interests of his brother tenants, and doing something which, whether rightly or wrongly, was considered dishonourable and mean, and take the fact of his customers immediately leaving his shop, what is more natural than to infer that that loss of his trade was the result of public opinion, and not the work of one or two tenants who, forsooth, were coercing the whole district of Tipperary not to deal with a certain individual. And you are asked to believe that the fact of these shopkeepers having lost their trade is evidence—of what? That Father Humphreys and

Mr. Dalton and the rest of the defendants had entered into a conspiracy to compel the Smith-Barry tenants not to pay their rents. Similar evidence had been given with reference to Ballykisteen. You have evidence that Ballykisteen is a large farm, with five houses upon it, and is at present in the occupation of some tenants who have been evicted by Mr. Smith-Barry. For my part I wish that the Crown had gone more fully into this matter, and given evidence of that most marvellous spectacle of recent times—the growth of a new town in place of the old town of Tipperary. Why did not the Crown go into that? If it was a crime to take Ballykisteen for the accommodation of the evicted tenants, still more was it a crime to have any part in the building of New Tipperary. Mr. Dalton was proved to have had some connection with the taking of Ballykisteen. Was it a proof that he was anxious to provide houses and land for some of his brother evicted tenants? Not at all. It was proof conclusive that he had entered into a combination to coerce his brother tenants. Surely the argument was absurd. Our position with reference to Ballykisteen and to New Tipperary is this. All the transactions took place after the tenants had been evicted; they were all done for the purpose of providing lands, and houses, and homes, for the evicted families. We deny and scout as absurd the presumption that that is either in itself a crime or could be received as evidence of this alleged conspiracy. One thing I desire to make clear. Whatever this Court may think of it, the defendants are proud of their connection with New Tipperary and Ballykisteen; and if the same thing had to be done to-morrow, and if far heavier consequences than those which this Court can inflict were to ensue, they would do the same thing again, for it was a noble duty to provide for the comfort of tenants driven from their homes by Mr. Smith-Barry. I submit that there is no evi-

dence whatever of the existence of any such combination as stated in the charge.

You may, perhaps, be inclined to hold that there is evidence of the existence of a combination on the part of the Smith-Barry tenants to punish Mr. Smith-Barry for his own action on the Ponsonby estate. I submit that, even if that were so, it would not be an illegal conspiracy. Even if you come to the conclusion that such a conspiracy exists, and that it is illegal, you cannot hold the defendants guilty upon this charge, which is one of having taken part in quite a different conspiracy—one to coerce and intimidate the Smith-Barry tenants into not paying their rent. I submit I have shown to you that this combination was an honourable combination, a peaceful combination, and in the third place a perfectly legal one.

There still remains, however, the second part to the case. For the sake of argument let me suppose that you differ entirely with me, and held that there was evidence of the existence of an illegal conspiracy of the precise nature alleged by the Crown, then you have to consider a second question—had each of the defendants been a member of that conspiracy? In deciding that question you are bound to consider only the evidence of the acts committed within the six months covered by the charge. Outside that period you cannot go. You must judge of the connection of each defendant with the conspiracy by his own acts alone, and by his acts committed within the six months over which, only, you have summary jurisdiction. Those acts must be judged on their merits. If they are acts, innocent or even ambiguous in their character, so long as they are capable of an innocent interpretation, you must acquit the defendants. Baron Rolfe, in the Chartist case, told the jury that before convicting they must have evidence of “such acts perpe-

trated by the accused as indicate such a complete union of design as makes it impossible not to see there must have been some combination beforehand." A great Irishman, Chief Justice Whiteside, in defending one of the traversers in the *Queen v. O'Connell* said to the jury, "you must be satisfied, in order to find a verdict of guilty, that it is impossible that the traversers could have done these acts except for the purpose of carrying out that complete, fixed, and settled combination, confederation, and agreement specified in the indictment."

I ask you to apply this test to the acts proved against each of the defendants in this case. Could these acts have been committed except for the purpose of forwarding a conspiracy to intimidate Smith-Barry's tenants?

I have taken out from the mass of irrelevant matter printed by the Crown at the expense of the ratepayers all the acts alleged against Mr. Kelly and Mr. Dalton within the six months. They occupied but a small sheet of paper. On the 7th of August Constable Fitzmaurice saw Mr. Kelly call at Father Humphrey's house, and on the 8th of August he saw him do the same thing, and both of them proceeded to the railway station, where they purchased a copy of the *Freeman's Journal*. On the 9th of August the same thing happened, but there was an additional element of criminality from the fact that Mr. Dalton formed one of the party. All three gentlemen belonged to the town of Tipperary, and it was absolutely an appalling thing they should happen to meet on two days in one week in their own town. Then, as regarded Mr. Dalton, Constable Hobson saw him meet Mr. David Sheehy, and they were afterwards in the company of Father Humphreys and Mr. Cullinan. On the 31st August Mr. Dalton met Mr. J. V. Bourke. On the 28th August Constable King saw Mr.

Dalton go into Mr. Kelly's house. On the 11th June Father Humphreys went along the railway line ; two policemen followed him. He got on a car, the police followed. At a certain point Mr. Kelly came out of a house. The police, however, had missed Father Humphreys. One of them remained to watch Mr. Kelly and the other proceeded on his way. Further on he met Father Humphreys with a number of people, and he gave it as his opinion that a meeting had been held. This was one of the facts given in evidence against Mr. Kelly ; though if a meeting had been held at all it was manifest that Mr. Kelly could not have been present at it. On another occasion Mr. Dalton was observed to shake hands with Messrs. William O'Brien and John Dillon at Thurles, where they were on a private visit to the Archbishop of Cashel, and you are asked to believe that he did this in furtherance of the conspiracy. This was the entire evidence of acts of Mr. Dalton and Mr. Kelly within the six months. Let me take another instance of the evidence which was produced against the defendants. On the 24th May my friend Mr. Condon was seen at the Limerick Junction. If being at the Limerick Junction was a crime, I need not say how deeply dyed with criminality your worships would be, and as for Mr. Ronan, he could never show his face in a court of justice again. On another occasion Mr. Condon was seen at Cashel in company with his two sisters, one of whom was a nun, and came from a foreign land to visit the Rock of Cashel. In the name of common sense what is the meaning of a responsible government submitting such acts to any tribunal ? It was an insult to common sense. It was a gross insult to two men of common sense and intelligence to ask them on evidence of that sort to convict anybody, even a Parnellite member of Parliament.

One useful result of that trial at least would be that it had exposed the system of shadowing. What did shadowing mean? It meant following a man about, dogging a man from place to place, watching every act of his public and private life, trying to overhear his private conversation, peeping through window blinds to see what was going on in private rooms, going into public-houses and hiding in the snugs partitioned off from the shops, to try and hear the conversations of the people at the counter, bursting into houses and following people into private rooms, following a priest even into the church and to the altar, dogging a man's steps in such a way as would be impossible in any other country in the world, and in a way, which, in my opinion, amounted to an absolute illegal practice which any man would be justified in resenting and meeting with physical violence. Every act of the defendants, public and private, for the six months charged, had been noted in the books of the "shadows," and the Court has before it what the sum total of it all amounted to. After all their shadowing and all their spying, after flooding Tipperary with armies of plain clothes policemen and uniformed policemen until the town presented the appearance of a place besieged, no single act of the defendants had been proved which, taken by itself, was not an innocent act and an unambiguous act, and the whole case for the Crown was simply this, the putting together of all these legal acts in a conspiracy net, and then asking the Court to hold that they become guilty acts by combination, and by asking it further to hold, without a particle of justification, that the defendants were responsible for every act that might have been done by a corner boy, and for every stone or squib thrown in the town during this time.

I submit in the first place that this combination

amongst the Smith-Barry tenants is an honourable combination; secondly, that it was a peaceful combination; and thirdly, that it is a legal combination; and that on whatever point of view you look at it, whether you regard it as legal or illegal, yet that it was not such an illegal combination as described in the charge, but one of a totally different character. I have shown conclusively that even if you regard the combination as illegal, still that all the acts of the defendants proved within the six months were reasonably capable of an innocent interpretation, and were not sufficient to convict them.

Now, gentlemen, I have finished. I confess I feel some embarrassment as to what words to address to you in conclusion. Were I addressing a jury I would urge them in the name of liberty and justice to find a verdict for my clients. I would remind them that the history of British liberty is to a great extent the history of the courage and constancy of English jurors in refusing, time after time, to acquiesce in attempts by the Crown similar to the attempt made in this case, to fix the insidious and terrible charge of conspiracy upon the leaders of the people. I would call upon them to emulate the courage and independence of these English jurors, and by their verdict to put down the use of this rusty weapon of oppression. I would urge them to banish from their minds every preconceived prejudice, every political predilection, and to bring in a verdict, brave, honourable, and independent. You will forgive me when I say I cannot with sincerity address such observations to you. Your decision upon the difficult points of law which have arisen in this case cannot be accepted as final, and must go elsewhere for review. Your decision on the facts will not be received by anyone inside this Court or out of it as conclusive. For my clients I have to say they will receive

your decision, whatever it may be, with equanimity. If that decision be an adverse one and be upheld elsewhere, they are ready to go to prison with alacrity and with pride in this cause, cheered by the knowledge that, at every stage of the history of their country, the prison cell has been hallowed by the sufferings of the best and bravest of their race, and strong in the conviction that that outside public, whose opinion they value more than they do the opinion of this Court, will justify their policy, appreciate their motive, and applaud their action.

THE PARNELL CRISIS.

SPEECH AT MEETING OF IRISH PARLIAMENTARY PARTY IN
COMMITTEE ROOM 15 OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

ON DECEMBER 1ST, 1890.

MR. PARNELL IN THE CHAIR.

XIV.

THE speech to which we have just listened from Mr. Sexton seems to me, in its tone at any rate, to be a strong argument for a delay of this question, and I have risen for the purpose of supporting the amendment moved by my hon. and gallant friend, Colonel Nolan, for an adjournment of the meeting to Dublin. One of the earlier declarations made by Mr. Sexton is one which bodes ill for any useful purpose from a debate of this question in this room. I allude to this statement that no power on earth can change his mind upon the matter. If that be so, I ask myself what earthly use is debate or discussion on the matter if men's minds are closed to argument and to reason? If that be so, would it not be better for us at once, and without the delay of even half an hour, to give our votes without reason, or argument, or discussion upon this mere matter of party organisation, which, when looked more closely into, involves the deposition of the leader of the Irish race?

I claim the right to speak as one of those who, during the ten years that have elapsed, both in Parliament and in the country, in America, in Australia, and throughout

the world, have freely given the best years, perhaps, of my life in sustainment of the cause which Mr. Sexton served and you led. There was one portion of Mr. Sexton's speech which found a responsive echo in my heart, and it was that portion where he deprecated any heated expression from members of his party which might lead to bitterness and animosity, which probably, if not checked, might last for a lifetime. I echo that, but in echoing it, I am bound, as an honest man, to say that that consideration did not have the effect of modifying many of the expressions used and almost the whole of the tone adopted by Mr. Sexton himself. This is a question, gentlemen, whether you will come to a decision now on the question of retirement of the leader of the party or whether you will adjourn for further consideration. One of the arguments used by my honourable and gallant friend, Captain Nolan, is that we ought to meet for this purpose in the metropolis of our country. That may seem a matter more of sentiment than of practical importance; but I am bound to say that in this matter it is impossible, in my opinion, for the representatives of the Irish nation to place sentiment entirely out of their minds. It was in the capital of the Irish nation that you were called formerly to the chair that you occupy, and I do say that if you are to be deposed from that chair the proper place to do it is in the capital of the Irish nation and in the face of the Irish people. Mr. Sexton denies that this is a question that he feels bound to appeal to his constituents upon. That seems to me an unanswerable argument if his description of these proceedings be true, that they are a matter merely of party organisation. Then I admit that this party, meeting anywhere, at very short notice, might deal with it. But let us not shuffle with the real situation. This is not a mere question of party organisation. It is a

question as to whether the man who is not merely the leader of this party, but who has by his services earned for himself the position of leader of the Irish race throughout the world, is to be deposed from that position by a vote of the representatives of the Irish people; and it does seem to me a heart-breaking circumstance that any consideration of danger to a party alliance in England, should have such an effect upon the minds of the National representatives of the Irish people as to induce men like Mr. Sexton to deprecate in this matter a short delay, that the Irish members may make sure that in this matter they are acting in accordance with the full wishes and opinions of the Irish race at home and abroad. Mr. Sexton used a very strong argument—if this were a small matter such as he described—in saying that a dissolution of Parliament may take place, I understood, within the eight days for which my friend Colonel Nolan asks for an adjournment, or to take the other extreme limit which my hon. and gallant friend suggested, three weeks—that a dissolution of Parliament may find us, if it takes place during that period, in a disorganised and disunited position. Is there any man in this room sanguine enough to say that if to-day, by your vote, you depose from that chair the leader of the Irish race that in eight days the result of that action will have so disappeared that Ireland will present to the enemy an unbroken and united front? My position in this matter is a very plain one. I have been, as you know, Mr. Parnell, a faithful and loyal colleague and follower of yours. I have, as you, gentlemen, know—those of you at any rate who have been for years in this party with me—that I have been a faithful comrade. I owe loyalty to my leader, and I also owe loyalty to my party, and I think, although this is not perhaps the main issue, the sooner we make our positions clear the better. In this matter I

intend to vote and to use every exertion in my power for the leadership of this party and the Irish people by Mr. Parnell ; but, at the same time I recognise the duty I owe to this party, and I recognise the obligation of the pledge which I took when, in 1885, I was elected a member of this party, and if this party, acting in a regular way, comes to a hostile decision to my view, then, before taking any steps to support Mr. Parnell if he chooses to go further, I will deem it my duty to resign my seat, and in the most formal way consult the wishes of my constituents. This is the position I take up here, and the sooner that position is made clear to my friends the better. It seems to me that this amendment raises matters of the gravest importance. Mr. Sexton has based his refusal of a delay upon this ground, namely—that this matter is urgent. And why is it urgent? Because, it is said, the continued leadership of Mr. Parnell for eight days means the utter destruction of the Liberal alliance. Now, the danger to the alliance between the Irish party and an English party at this moment is no doubt a matter of concern and importance; but in deciding a question of this kind, where we are asked to sell our leader to preserve an alliance, it seems to me that we are bound to inquire what we are getting for the price that we are to pay.

But first, it seems to me that, in selling our leader, in order to preserve the Liberal alliance, we are selling absolutely and irrevocably the independence of the Irish party. This party has been powerful only because it has been independent. Every Irish party that ever existed in this House fell in the same way—through the independence of the party being bartered away, and I believe in my heart, that if we sacrifice you to preserve this alliance, the days in our generation of the

independence of the Irish party are at an end. What I would like to know would be the position of this party if you were sacrificed, and if a portion of the party held together—I am supposing a number of things—and if the Liberal party came back to power and a Home Rule Bill were proposed, what position, I want to know, would the Irish party under such circumstances be in, if they went to Mr. Gladstone and demanded from him a full measure of our national rights? Why, Mr. Gladstone would be absolutely unfettered, and he would have the Irish party, so to speak, in the hollow of his hand, the independence of the party would be gone, and it would be—and this is one of the most urgent reasons for the course I am taking—a discredited and powerless tool of the Liberal party.

In estimating the value of a Liberal alliance we are bound to take into account the statements made by you, Mr. Parnell, in the manifesto which you have issued. Now, you have made certain statements with reference to the provisions of the Home Rule Bill which Mr. Gladstone says he will introduce if he comes back to power. You have given a description of that Bill as to which I challenge contradiction from any Nationalist in this room when I say that it reduces the Bill to a sham and a fraud on the Nationalist aspirations. And if that description given by you be true, then all the sacrifices made to obtain that Bill would be thrown away, and we would be sacrificing you for what would be regarded by the Irish race throughout the world as a compromise of our principles and a betrayal of our cause. But Mr. Gladstone has made a denial. He has stated that his recollection on the four points mentioned by you—upon the vital point of the control by the Irish Executive of the Irish police, upon the equally vital point of power to deal with the land question being given to the

Irish Parliament—he says his recollection differs from yours, and he denies your version of the provisions of the Bill. But Mr. Gladstone abstains absolutely from giving to the public or the Irish nation anything in the shape of a definite or clear statement as to what he proposes, and if it comes to a question of recollection or of veracity, I have no hesitation in saying that I am prepared to take your word before his. But what I want to point out is this. This party is probably aware—if it is not aware of it I will ask you, sir, to confirm what I say, and I will appeal to Mr. Justin M'Carthy also to confirm it—this party is probably aware that on Saturday last you made a proposal to Mr. Gladstone of such a character as, I venture to say, stamps the whole of your conduct in this matter as highly patriotic and self-sacrificing.

That proposal, as I understood it—I speak subject to the correction of these gentlemen—was this, that if Mr. Parnell's recollection of what took place at that interview was wrong, then let Mr. Gladstone give definite and clear assurances to give power to a Parliament in Dublin to deal with the land question, and to give to that Parliament control over the police; that then, under these circumstances, you were willing, having gained that for the Irish nation, to sacrifice every personal consideration and retire from the chair; and, Mr. Parnell, as I understand the situation, that overture to Mr. Gladstone has been fruitless, and for one reason or another, as to which others must speak, Mr. Gladstone declined to give the assurances required. Now, sir, I mention these things for two reasons; first of all—and God knows it seems a heart-breaking thing for an Irish Nationalist member to have to say it—I use this argument because I think it seems your conduct is honourable, patriotic, and self-sacrificing. I allude to it also

because it shows the measure of the value of this Liberal alliance for which we are asked to sacrifice you. This Liberal alliance means this—that if we consent to sacrifice you, the Liberals will, forsooth, make some little endeavour in the country to act up to their solemn pledges of supporting Home Rule as a just cause, and they hope—a very delusive hope as it seems to me—that under these circumstances they may be able to obtain a majority at the English polls. Very well. And that will mean the introduction by Mr. Gladstone of a Home Rule Bill. You have challenged the Home Rule Bill as a fraud upon the national hopes, and you have told Mr. Gladstone that if he says he will introduce provisions making it a genuine Home Rule Bill you will retire, and I say that you can appeal with confidence to the Irish race to decide between you. If this be the measure of the benefit to be gained by Ireland by the preservation of the Home Rule alliance I do not believe the Home Rule alliance is worth preservation at the enormous, at the terrible, cost of sacrificing you. Mr. Parnell, I was one of those who, I am bound to say, in common with most of my colleagues in this room, in common with Mr. Healy, in common with a large number of other gentlemen in this room, spoke at once in Dublin, freely spoke our mind on your political position, immediately after the newspapers had told us the details of the recent trial. I was not present at your re-election on Tuesday, but as I understood it, the party unanimously re-elected you as chairman with the full knowledge, of course, of the proceedings to which I have alluded. The alteration in the attitude of the party only came about when Mr. Gladstone issued his ukase that, forsooth, you should be trampled under foot. I say that attitude taken by Mr. Gladstone was unworthy of a great man. I say that in my belief the

attitude taken by him was not the attitude, and up to this moment is not the attitude, of an honest man. My belief is that if he were a great man he would not have been so precipitate in writing that letter. My belief is that if he were an honest man, and true in his denials of your manifesto, he would now, even at the eleventh hour, give such assurances as would ease the political situation. No; it seems to me that his desire is that you should be trampled to the ground, and whoever tramples you I will not take part in the transaction. As to your retention being a danger to the Irish cause and the Home Rule cause, I do not believe that it is a real danger. And these are the reasons why I do not believe my friend Mr. Sexton's argument is a sound one when he says that this matter is urgent because this alliance would be broken up if you are retained. There is one other matter to which I want to allude. It is a matter which has not been directly mentioned in this room, excepting some communications read from the chair, but which has formed, both in your manifesto and outside, a considerable ground of argument and discussion, viz., the question of evicted tenants in Ireland. Now, I am speaking in presence of my friends Mr. Condon, Mr. Sheehy, and Mr. Roche, and other men who have been specially connected with this question, and I claim from them the concession of this position to me, that I have been identified during the whole of this Campaign movement in Ireland as much as they have been identified with these tenants, and I am as much pledged to those tenants as they are. When Mr. Dillon and Mr. O'Brien were leaving this country they did me the honour of asking me to take some share with one or two of my friends in the management of the affairs on these estates, and, therefore, I think I can speak as one who has had some responsibility in the matter,

and as one who, by his action, has shown he is full of sympathy for these tenants; and I say here that I would sooner cut off my right hand than do anything which would have the effect of destroying the hopes of these men and leaving them to starvation. But, sir, I take a different view altogether with reference to this matter from that taken by my friends. I fear that if this party, yielding to English clamour, yielding to the dictation of English statesmen, sacrifices you, the source of supply on which these tenants have been depending for so long—the generosity of the Irish people in America—will be diverted in a way which could not be possible under any other conceivable circumstances. Any man who has been in America, as I have, and knows America as intimately as I do, must be aware of the fact that your dethronement will rend the Irish people in America in twain; and I say in the face of such a calamity as that in America it will be impossible to rely on the source of the generosity which has been sufficient to sustain those tenants in the past. More than that. I believe that in the pledge you have given you will stand by those tenants, they have the most complete assurance that their case will in future be dealt with, that the portion of your demands on the Home Rule Bill in reference to the power to be given to the Irish Parliament to deal with the land question is a direct demand on your part for power to restore these tenants to their homes. And I believe more than this; I believe that these tenants would unanimously reprobate the idea that you are to be sacrificed for them. I believe that if these Campaign tenants were to be polled tomorrow they would have sufficient manliness and patriotism to say to their representatives here—"Your first duty is Ireland—your first duty is the loyalty you owe to the independence of your party and your leader; and you are

not to allow our position or interests in the remotest degree to interfere with the discharge of that duty." I will say nothing about my motive in this matter. I disdain to do it. My public record, without any boasting, I should say, entitles me to entertain the belief that whatever course I take the Irish people will believe that I am actuated by the highest motives of patriotism.

It is true that I have a feeling of personal loyalty to you. I have said elsewhere, and I say here, that you have been my friend, and I think this is no time in which a man who has been once your friend should turn against you. But I most solemnly say that while you remain my friend, and my personal attachment is the same to you as it always was, I declare most solemnly that in this consideration I am not allowing my personal attachment to you to weigh in the balance. I would sacrifice my liberty. I would sacrifice my life, I would sacrifice the liberty and life of the truest and best friend I have in the world for the sake of the independence of my country. It is not a personal motive that animates me; it is because I believe your maintenance is necessary to the success of our cause; it is because I believe that your overthrow will be an instance of ingratitude such as has been shown by no other country in the world, and such as will stamp the Irish people as unworthy of those rights for which you and all of us have been working. For this reason, and with a full sense of my responsibility, I am here to support your leadership, and I hope it will not be considered irreverent of me if I say that I hope the God of our fathers will direct the heart and conscience of every man in this room to come to a just decision; and I consider whatever argument may sway the minds of men that their main reason for supporting you, or even opposing you, will be a desire for the welfare of their country. Expressing my hope, with which

I will conclude, that this terrible crisis in the history of Ireland, and in the history of the party, may not be allowed, shall not be allowed, to bring once more upon our people the terrible curse of disunion, second only to the terrible curse of want of independence to which in the past we have owed most of the miseries and misfortunes of our country, I invite you, gentlemen, to give your votes for Ireland—I invite you to give your vote for the independence and honour of Ireland's representation, and, from my point of view, you cannot give your vote for Ireland or the independence of our party, or the cause of our freedom, unless you give it in support of the man who has brought us to our present position, and who, in spite of all, in my humble judgment, is destined to lead us to the fulfilment of all the hopes and aspirations of our race.

THE PARNELL CRISIS.

SECOND SPEECH IN COMMITTEE ROOM 15.

XV.

I TAKE too grave and serious a view of my responsibility as a representative of the people, in the face of a crisis such as this, to allow myself by intemperate and hysterical language, such as has been used by Mr. Healy, to be tempted into descending to answer his vituperation. He, forsooth, has spoken about insults hurled, or likely to be hurled, at him. His whole speech from beginning to end was one string of insults to you and your friends, for I need not say to any man who heard that speech, that the whole of it was instinct from beginning to end with insult. He spoke of our bogus resolutions. He spoke of our action yesterday not being *bona fide*. He spoke of our bad faith and of our desire to waste time and to delay the decision of this party. I, for my part, regard these accusations of his as amounting to insult, and for my part nothing except the terrible and weighty responsibility which rests upon every man in this room upon this question restrains me from resenting those imputations as I believe they deserve to be resented. Sir, he has spoken to-day as a man who has deliberately thrown to the winds the position which he occupied yesterday. Why, yesterday evening Mr. Healy spoke of the blessed hope which had dawned upon him of a golden bridge. He spoke yesterday with tears in his voice of the opportunities which he

thought he saw to bridge over this difficulty. I deliberately declare my opinion, having listened to the speech now delivered, that he must have come into this room determined to do his best at any cost to break down and destroy that golden bridge. I, for the moment, refrain from answering certain portions of Mr. Healy's speech which demand an answer, and which shall be answered before I sit down. But first I desire to recall the reason and the recollection of this meeting to the true facts of the situation. Gentlemen, I entreat of you, my colleagues in the representation of Ireland, not simply to listen to what I have to say, with minds made up, and with determination not to answer me, as Mr. Healy has invited you. I ask you to listen to my words as the words of a man who desires to reach your reason, and appeals to your patriotism, and I demand you shall listen with open minds to what I have to say. I deny absolutely the accuracy of the representation of the situation which has been given by Mr. Healy. I do not want to impute motives, but deliberately or without deliberation, Mr. Healy has absolutely misrepresented the attitude taken up by the chairman. Our position yesterday was this. Mr. Clancy moved a resolution to the effect that Mr. Gladstone should be asked for certain assurances as to the Home Rule Bill, and, as far as I know, there has been no demand for the withdrawal of the resolution.

It was to the effect that difference of recollection having arisen between Mr. Parnell and Mr. Gladstone with regard to the Hawarden conference, that the whips of the party be asked to communicate with Mr. Gladstone and to obtain from him assurances on two vital points for the information of the party; and that pending the obtaining of that information that the discussion of Mr. Barry's resolution for the deposition of Mr. Parnell should be suspended.

I want, if I can, to bring you back from the heated atmosphere of vituperation and malice, back to the atmosphere of reason and patient investigation of truth.

I appeal now to Mr. Sexton to follow me. I understood, after Mr. Clancy's resolution was moved, that Mr. Sexton raised two points of vital importance, and asked for an answer. First he wanted to know if he was correct in assuming that if these communications were held with Mr. Gladstone, and if assurances on these two vital points of a satisfactory nature were obtained, that Mr. Parnell would resign the leadership of his party. I freely, for my part, said "yes," Mr. Clancy said "yes," and you, Mr. Parnell, said "yes," and one would think, to listen to Mr. Healy now, that there had been some receding from that position. I say there has been no receding from that position, and if Mr. Healy thinks so he is acting under a misapprehension. But the whole point turns on the second inquiry of Mr. Sexton. Having got that assurance he went on to ask whether the majority of the party, or Mr. Parnell himself was to be the judge as to whether Mr. Gladstone's assurances were satisfactory or not? Everybody who heard that inquiry realised the fact that that was the crux, and upon that would turn inevitably the result of this attempt to settle the matter. I believe, sir, that your statement has been misunderstood and misrepresented by Mr. Healy.

What is the position which you take up, sir? You say to the party—"You ask me to pledge myself to resign the leadership of the party if you, the majority of the party, consider that the assurance on these two vital points are satisfactory. Before pledging myself in that way, before surrendering absolutely my individual responsibility that I have not sought, but which has been placed upon me by my

countrymen throughout the world, I am bound to make this preliminary inquiry:—Are the views of the party on these two points in consonance with the views of the Irish race?"

Mr. Parnell said he believed there would be no difference of opinion about this. I believe there cannot. In my remarks the other day I challenged any man in the room to stand up and deny that he would resent as an insult and a betrayal of our cause such a Home Rule scheme as was sketched in the Hawarden conversation.

Mr. Condon, Mr. Healy, and other gentlemen said they would not accept such a scheme as satisfactory, and in point of fact they demanded for the Irish Parliament full power to deal with the police and to settle the land question. If that be so, I ask is it an unreasonable thing for Mr. Parnell to say, before surrendering his personal responsibility and placing himself in the hands of the majority, to ask from that majority an expression of their opinion as to what their views are? For my part I am convinced that the views of the great majority of the party are thoroughly sound as to the settlement of this question. If that be so what is the meaning of this attempt to break down this golden bridge because Mr. Parnell has asked the party to assure him that their views on those vital points agree with his? Mr. Parnell's position is clear. He says:—

"If I find that the views of the party are sound views, then absolutely and without reservation I place my leadership of this party in the hands of the majority of the party. Aye, a majority which I know at this moment to be hostile to me and my future."

When Mr. Parnell has made it absolutely certain that the Home Rule Bill will be a reality and not a sham, then he will place his future in the hands of a majority which he knows is hostile to him at this moment.

What is the meaning of describing that as a sudden change of attitude? I assert there is no change of attitude. I assert that the change of attitude has been on the part of Mr. Healy. We all heard, not without emotion, the broken words of Mr. Healy last night. They seemed to me to betoken a stirring of his better nature. Mr. Healy is an able man. No man living has admired his dexterity and courage in debate, and his powers as a dialectician in the past history of the movement more than I have. He must forgive me if I say I think he has one great defect. He is too liable to be carried away by temper. He is too liable to be carried away by hysteria. I say that his speech to-day was the worst-tempered and most hysterical speech that was ever delivered by a man in the position of a leading politician—one of those, perhaps, who will form one of the Triumvirate who will rule Irish politics, as the Triumvirate after the death of Julius Cæsar tried to govern the Roman Empire with very ill success to themselves. I regret the speech. I do him the justice of saying that I believe it was the speech of an ill-tempered and hysterical man. God forbid I should say that his emotion last night was a piece of acting, and that to-day he came into this room determined, as he was determined last night to break down this golden bridge. I make no such accusation. I give him the credit of believing that his speech was the speech of an ill-tempered and hysterical man. Whatever his motive was, I say he has done his best here to-day to destroy the only hope which, during these unhappy days, has come to lighten our hearts and to brighten the heavy load of our misery. I assume, Mr. Parnell, from your silence, that I have accurately described your position.

Mr. Parnell—Hear, hear.

Mr. Redmond—I appeal to my friend, Mr. Sexton, to say

what substantial difference there is between your attitude yesterday and your attitude to-day. Does he state that there was a change of front? When Mr. Clancy's amendment was moved yesterday you, sir, were asked a question. In reply to that question you have given an answer which I believe will be received in Ireland, as it was received by many of your colleagues, as another proof of your soundness of purpose and of your devotion to the cause which you have led to the very threshold of victory. I say deliberately that a heavy responsibility will rest on every man, no matter whether he is Priest, Bishop, or Member of Parliament, who is instrumental in breaking down this golden bridge of peace, and in plunging us, as they will if they twist and distort your action and refuse your offer of peace, in plunging the country into what inevitably must be a period of disunion and turmoil.

I heard with sorrow the threats of Mr. Healy. They use threats about the breaking of Parliamentary pledges. I know for my part that I have never taken a pledge which I do not mean to keep. I say it is an insult to his colleagues for Mr. Healy to insinuate, even in the most indirect way, that any man of this party is more liable to break a pledge than he is himself.

Our position, sir, in this matter is the position of men who desire to maintain the independence of the Irish party, of men who are not willing to sacrifice a great political captain to English clamour, unless we are clear and decided that in doing so we are gaining some commensurate political advantage for our country. We are in the position of men who have stood around Mr. Parnell and have advised him that, if by these negotiations he could obtain this solid benefit for his country in the shape of assurances which would bind the

Liberal party to make the Home Rule Bill a reality—that if he could do that benefit to his country, he should retire in God's name and stand down from the position he has so long occupied before the Irish race. The position of the men opposed to us is that of men who have again and again declared that "the stench of the Divorce Court" (to use Mr. Healy's phrase) would not prevent them from supporting the continued leadership of Mr. Parnell, and who come here in one or two hours after the issue of the ukase of Mr. Gladstone calling for your dethronement, throw to the wind all their previous declarations, and have not the courage to say that their change of attitude is due to the orders of him who will be their new captain; men who declared, as Mr. Healy declared in my own hearing, at the Leinster Hall, that if you, sir, were abandoned by the Irish nation the Irish nation would no longer be his nation. They are men who are willing to accept the vague and indefinite assurances of Mr. Gladstone as to the future of Home Rule; who are willing to sacrifice you without thought or heed of what the sacrifice would entail; they are, without knowing fully what they are so doing, going to sacrifice the one man who is capable of saving the nation. I heard the other day a statement made in this room which struck me as unanswerable. It was said that in every other change of leadership the existing leader was driven out in order to put in his place a man whom the sentiments of the people pointed out as a better man. Who is the man to take your place? Who is the man who, when the Home Rule Bill comes to be settled, can discuss its provisions on an equal footing with the leaders of English parties? There is no such man.

Mr. T. M. Healy—Suppose Mr. Parnell died?

Mr. Redmond—I will answer that. I say, Mr. Parnell

being amongst us, why should we drive him out? I say we have in him the greatest Irishman since the days of Hugh O'Neill, and we shall not drive him out. You ask me what would happen if we had not got Mr. Parnell? My answer is, we should be obliged to take inferior men. But we have got him. You, sir, have offered to resign your political future into the hands of a hostile majority of the party on one condition, namely, that the majority obtains assurance from Mr. Gladstone on these two important points, and that offer has been met with insult of the deepest dye, with bitter recrimination, with an endeavour to inflame the country against you. Is it too late to ask this party to calmly consider this question from the point of view of a peaceful settlement on the lines laid down? Surely this party can have no objection to concede Mr. Parnell's idea of the power of a Home Rule Parliament over the police and the land. Is there any objection to that? I challenge any man to stand up and say that is not his idea of a Home Rule Bill. Is it unreasonable that you should approach Mr. Gladstone on these points? It did not strike Mr. Healy last night when he spoke with tear-laden accents of a golden bridge that Mr. Parnell could ask for no assurances from Mr. Gladstone. Why should Mr. Parnell ask for assurances? Mr. Gladstone declares that Mr. Parnell's statements about the interview at Hawarden are wrong, but if Mr. Parnell is right the Home Rule Bill is a sham; and is it therefore unreasonable to go to Mr. Gladstone and say, "One small point keeps us from union. That small matter is in your hands, and in God's name, and for the sake of the country you love, and to which you have devoted the last days of your life, say the word that will end this painful situation, that will enable us to unite and enable you to lead once more this Liberal alliance?" Can Mr.

Gladstone refuse an appeal of that kind? I say he cannot. It is absolutely impossible that he can. It seems to me that those who think he can must believe in the supposition which seems to be entertained to some extent by Mr. Parnell, that it is impossible to get a straight answer from Mr. Gladstone. If that is not your view, and if the request is a reasonable one, I ask, why should you now break down this golden bridge across which it was hoped we would be able to pass from the land of dissension and disunity into once more the land of peace and amity. Let no man in the room foolishly believe that if this debate is hurried to a close the matter is going to end here. My belief is that in the moment when, by an adverse vote of this party, you succeed in driving Mr. Parnell from the chair, and attempt to drive him out of public life, and trample him under foot, that very moment the Irish race throughout the world will be rent in twain. I do not say on what side the balance will be, but I do say a division will be created. I assert my belief that the dethronement of Mr. Parnell will be the signal of the kindling of the fires of dissension in every land where a man of the Irish race has found a home. It is because I look forward with dread and horror to that future that I have taken my stand so firmly by your side, Mr. Parnell. I believe that the one hope of safety for Ireland and the Home Rule cause is that you should remain at your post, or else abdicate your post, having obtained for Ireland security for the settlement of the question. If you, sir, obtain that security for Ireland, and then retire, I believe the Irish race will consent to your temporary withdrawal from the position you now occupy, but will do so with sorrow-laden hearts. But if you are not allowed to obtain that security, if, relying on the vague promises of Mr. Gladstone and bartering away the independence of our

party, my friends drive you from your position, I believe that just as the assassination of Julius Cæsar was the signal for "malice domestic and fierce civil strife that cumbered all the parts of Italy," your withdrawal, I repeat, will be the signal for lighting all over the world those fires of dissension and discord with which we have been familiar in the past. Let no man accuse me of wishing to ignite those fires, but they will be lighted if this act is done, and in them will be burned to ashes the last hopes of the Irish people in this generation for the freedom of their country.

THE NATIONAL DEMAND.

SPEECH IN THE ROTUNDA, DUBLIN, ST. PATRICK'S DAY 1892.

THE RIGHT HON. THE LORD MAYOR IN THE CHAIR.

XVI.

My Lord Mayor, ladies and gentlemen—The subject which I have chosen for my speech to-night is one that is capable of treatment in many and various ways. For example: it would be an easy and pleasant task upon St. Patrick's Night to go back over the pages of Irish History and show that the Irish National demand has been in substance the self-same through all the ages that have passed since the Norman foot first dared to pollute our independent shore. It would be a useful and interesting study, no doubt, to trace the fortunes of the Irish National cause, in sunshine and in shadow, through the centuries that have passed, and to point out how vastly and how surely that cause has lost by subserviency to our traditional enemies, and by internal treachery, and how every victory that we ever won was the result of self-reliance and independence. My purpose to-night, however, ladies and gentlemen, is not historic; I desire rather to deal with the Irish political situation as it exists at this moment. I desire, if I can, to say something to meet what I conceive to be the most urgent need of the present situation in Ireland, and to face boldly and grapple resolutely with those dangers, which, now that we ought

to be upon the very threshold of final victory, seem to threaten the fortunes of that cause for which so many countless thousands of our race have sacrificed liberty and life. My Lord Mayor, it may seem a strange thing to say at this period of the nineteenth century, and after a history such as ours, yet, I believe it is absolutely true, that the most urgent need of the political situation in Ireland to-day is for the Irish people to declare to friend and foe alike, in clear and unmistakable language, what the National demand is, and what is the irreducible minimum which Irish Nationalists can ever be expected to accept as a settlement of their claims.

I propose, therefore, ladies and gentlemen, to-night to sketch in outline what the National demand is, and what, in my judgment, alone will satisfy it. Before doing so, however, I desire to explain why it is that I consider such a definition necessary, especially at a moment like this, when we see an effete Tory administration tottering to its doom, and when, in all human probability, we are upon the very eve of victory, at the English polls, of a great English party pledged to the principles of Home Rule.

My reasons, ladies and gentlemen, for considering a definition such as I have mentioned necessary to-day are three-fold. My first reason is Mr. Gladstone's persistent refusal under circumstances of an extraordinary character, to let the electors of the Three Kingdoms know what are the main provisions of his Home Rule scheme.

My second reason is to be found in certain speeches which have recently been delivered in England by Sir Wm. Harcourt, by Mr. Henry Fowler, and by Mr. Asquith, and other important Liberal leaders, and also in speeches delivered in Ireland by Mr. Davitt and some others. And, gentlemen, my third reason is to be found in the

danger, which, I believe, is becoming greater and more apparent every day that passes, that in the event of the House of Lords rejecting the Home Rule proposals of Mr. Gladstone the measure may be hung up, and that the Liberal majority in Parliament may proceed with a long list of British reforms. Now, my Lord Mayor, it has often been said during the months that have passed, that we trusted Mr. Gladstone before the split in the Irish party, and that we are equally safe in trusting to him now. The answer is obvious.

A Voice.—Never trust an Englishman.

Mr. Redmond.—Before the disastrous proceedings in December, 1890—before the revolt in Committee Room 15—Ireland had a representation absolutely united, not only in principle, but, apparently, in loyalty to one another. She had a party, whose independence was beyond question, and which was prepared to treat with, or to attack in turn, as the interests of Ireland decided, every English political combination. Above all, Ireland had a leader in whom she placed implicit confidence—a man of cool and far-seeing mind, of iron will and of unpurchasable integrity, who could neither be cajoled by Liberal blandishments nor terrified by Tory threats, a man who had proved himself a hard taskmaster for these English statesmen, the proudest and most powerful of whom he had brought to their knees.

Under these circumstances, perhaps, Ireland could afford to pursue a policy of trust, of patience, and of silence. I say she can afford to pursue that policy no longer. Her leader is gone, rudely torn in the prime of his manhood from the service of his country. His place is empty, and Ireland, in her dealings with England in the near future, will have to trust to men none of whom possess any single one of the qualities which made Parnell the bulwark of the

National cause and the terror of its enemies. The Irish representation is divided. The majority of its members have bartered their independence to an English party, and, under these circumstances, I say it would be absolute madness for Irishmen to pursue this policy which, two years ago, with a competent leader, and a united and independent party, might have been both reasonable and safe.

But, ladies and gentlemen, we have stronger reasons even than these for refusing to trust blindly to the good intentions of an English party. In these days we live so rapidly that we are apt sometimes to forget even the most recent important events in our history. Allow me to remind you that on the 28th November, 1890, Mr. Parnell issued to the Irish people a manifesto, in which he gave to them an account of a conversation of his with Mr. Gladstone at Hawarden, and in which Mr. Gladstone plainly intimated that upon some of the most vital features of the Home Rule problem the hopes of Ireland would probably be disappointed. Speaking of that interview, Mr. Parnell said :—

“Upon the settlement of the Land Question it was held that this was one of the questions which must be reserved from the control of the Irish Legislature, but at the same time Mr. Gladstone intimated that, while he would renew his attempt to settle the matter by Imperial legislation on the lines of the Land Purchase Bill of 1886, he would not undertake to put any pressure upon his own side, or insist upon their adopting his views. In other and shorter words, the Irish Legislature was not to be given as solving the agrarian difficulty, and the Imperial Parliament would not. With regard to the control of the constabulary, it was stated by Mr. Gladstone that, having regard to the necessity for conciliating English opinion, he and his colleagues felt that it would be necessary to leave this force and the appointment of its officers under the control of the Imperial authority for an indefinite time, while the funds for its maintenance, appointment, and equipment would be absolutely provided out of Irish funds.”

Now, ladies and gentlemen, it is true that Mr. Gladstone gave a general denial to the accuracy of that statement of the effect of the conversation at Hawarden. But large masses of the Irish people have never had any doubt in this matter, in trusting the word of their own leader. And, as I will show you—if you have patience to follow my argument—as I will show you, every act and every word of Mr. Gladstone and his friends from that day to this goes to corroborate Mr. Parnell's recollection of that conversation. Now, it is manifest to you that if that conversation were correctly reported, we would be absolute madmen to place the future of our cause blindly in Mr. Gladstone's hands.

My Lord Mayor, it has been said by our political opponents that they disbelieve Mr. Parnell's warning. I say, sir, their own acts belie them. So grave did they consider the state of affairs disclosed by the report of the Hawarden conversation, that they actually in Committee Room 15 unanimously passed the following resolution, showing that they admitted the gravity of the situation, and that they admitted the necessity for having this point made clear. The first resolution they passed was as follows:—

“That in view of the difference that has arisen between Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Parnell as to the accuracy of Mr. Parnell's recollection of the suggestions offered at Hawarden in reference to the changes in and departures from the Home Rule Bill of 1886, on the subject of the control of the constabulary and the settlement of the Land Question, the following gentlemen—viz., Mr. M'Carthy, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Healy, Mr. Redmond, and Mr. Leamy, together with the whips—be instructed to take steps to ascertain from Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Morley, and Sir. Wm. Harcourt, for the information of the Party, what their views are upon these two vital points.”

And, ladies and gentlemen, when Mr. Gladstone took exception, as he did, to the form of that resolution. the party

the following day met, and again unanimously—the party before it was divided, consisting of both of the two present sections—unanimously passed the following additional resolution:—

“Resolved—That the following members of the Party—namely, Mr. Leamy, Mr. Redmond, Mr. Healy, and Mr. Sexton, are hereby authorised to request a conference with Mr. Gladstone for the purpose of representing the views of the Party, and requesting an intimation of the intentions of himself and his colleagues with respect to certain details connected with the following subjects:—First, the Settlement of the Irish Land Question; and secondly, the control of the Irish Constabulary Forces, in the event of the establishment of an Irish Legislature.”

So that these very gentlemen who, to-day say that we, forsooth, are guilty of treachery to Ireland because we ask for this information, by two unanimously passed resolutions, appointed a deputation of our party, consisting of men from both wings of the party, to go to Mr. Gladstone and to ask him for a declaration which would bind Mr. John Morley, Sir William Harcourt, and the Liberal party.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I was one of those who went on that deputation to Mr. Gladstone. I sat for a considerable time in his study, and Mr. Sexton and myself both put before Mr. Gladstone the situation as to Ireland with all the force and earnestness at our disposal. We told him that if Mr. Parnell's recollection of the Hawarden interview were wrong, as he, Mr. Gladstone, said, then he, Mr. Gladstone, was bound for the sake of Ireland to clear up the difference of recollection by stating what really occurred. We pointed out to him that our country at that moment was standing on the brink of an abyss, that unless some way out of the difficulty was found we had before us in Ireland a future of disunion, of internal discord, and that

the Liberal party had before them in England a future of danger and of difficulty. And we exhausted all the words of persuasion, and, I might say for myself, of absolute entreaty in our endeavour to get him to say one word, he knowing full well that, if that word were satisfactory, the Irish crisis would have ended. But, ladies and gentlemen, all our efforts failed.

Mr. Gladstone, for what reason I know not, unless it be that Mr. Parnell's story of the Hawarden interview was true. Mr. Gladstone remained absolutely silent. Well, the gentlemen who in Irish politics are now opposed to us on the Nationalist side did not even then profess to be content, because so powerful did they find our arguments and our demand to be that Mr. Gladstone is bound to speak—so urgent did they recognise the necessity for speaking to be that their first act after they seceded from Committee Room 15, was to issue a manifesto to the Irish people in the course of which they said :

“ We shall ask for these specific particulars in due time. To insist upon them at once would be to embarrass the friends of Ireland.”

Well, now, I respectfully urge upon the intelligence of this audience that “ in due time ” meant sometime before the dissolution of Parliament, because after the dissolution of Parliament there would be no need to ask particulars because Mr. Gladstone, of course, would then give them to the world. Now, these gentlemen have pledged themselves before the world to demand these particulars from Mr. Gladstone in due time.

I respectfully urge upon them that when, according to their own statements, we might have a dissolution any week or any day, the due time has arrived, and that at any rate it is rather audacious on their part, having made

these declarations, to blame us if we, believing the due time has arrived, do our best to get this information given to the English electors before they go to the polls at this momentous General Election.

Now, gentlemen, we believe for two reasons that Mr. Gladstone's refusal under the circumstances I have detailed, and in spite of the pressure that I pointed out, makes it imperative upon us to let the whole world know plainly what we want and what we must get, if the settlement is to be a satisfactory one.

Now the second reason which I have for saying that this condition is necessary now is, as I have said, to be found in certain speeches which have been made both in England and Ireland, and although I know that reading these extracts must necessarily try the patience of the audience, still, as this is such an important matter, and, as my argument should be as complete as I can make it, I shall ask you to bear with me, even if you think my remarks not as entertaining as you could wish them.

You will remember that shortly after the split took place in the Irish party, shortly after Mr. Parnell had spoken through the country and in Ireland, Sir William Harcourt made a speech which attracted attention all over the world. In that speech he used those memorable words:—

“While the Liberal Party were still in favour of Home Rule, neither they nor, he believed, the people of England would ever grant Mr. Parnell's Fenian Home Rule.”

Now, in a few moments, I will make it clear what Mr. Parnell's Fenian Home Rule is. I pass on to the next extract which I desire to read. It is from a speech delivered the other day, delivered at the Rossendale election,

by one of the most important men in the Liberal party, a man who in the future of the Liberal party is bound to take the very highest rank—I mean Mr. Fowler, the Member for Wolverhampton. What did he say?

“The Irish Parliament,” said he, “might do foolish things; they must work out their own salvation, but if they did wrong things the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament would become ‘an effective force.’”

Now, it is perfectly clear from that what Mr. Fowler means by Home Rule. He means some system of Local Government in Ireland which would leave vested in the Imperial Parliament a power of control, of interference, of revision, of amendments, which at any moment could be put in force to dwarf or maim or destroy our Irish legislation.

And Mr. Asquith, whose name you must be familiar with as that of a man who is one of the coming Liberal Parliamentary lawyers in England, said in Edinburgh:—

“Parliament, speaking, of course, of the Imperial Parliament, was not competent to part with its supremacy over any part of the nation. If the House of Commons chose—though, certainly it would not do so—but if it did choose to legislate for Ireland as well as for England, it would be perfectly competent for it to do so.”

That is, legislate for Ireland as well as England after the Irish Parliament had been granted to this country. So that, from those extracts, I say that it has become perfectly clear that there is amongst a section, at any rate, of Liberal leaders and of the Liberal party some sort of idea that we will be content in this country with a Parliament over which the Imperial Parliament will retain the power of interference and control on purely Irish matters.

Now, it is bad enough to have English politicians speaking in this way, but the necessity of defining our

position, which is made, as I submit, imperative by these English speeches, is made still more imperative when we find an Irish politician of the standing and position of Mr. Michael Davitt declaring, as he declared at Bandon just at the time when these English politicians were thus minimising Home Rule, that he and his friends would be satisfied to accept anything that could be got from the Liberal party. Here are his words :—

“ But if I find that all which the Irish heart yearns for, all which the Irish people aspire to win, cannot be got, if we, three millions of Irish nationalists, cannot wring all we would wish from thirty millions of British people, I for one will be satisfied to take all the English Liberal Party and the British democracy offer to us.”

We thus have important English Liberal politicians and leaders minimising Home Rule in England, and we have Mr. Michael Davitt saying at the same time in Ireland that we ought to take anything we can get from these Liberal politicians. These speeches constitute my second reason for saying that I believe it is absolutely necessary for the Irish people to make quite clear to the English electors before the General Election what exactly it is that we mean when we speak of Home Rule.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, let me deal shortly with my third reason for saying that this definition is necessary. I say that there has been an almost imperceptible, but to the keen eyes of politicians, a distinctly marked change of front on the part of the Liberal party going on for months with reference to the Home Rule question.

Ah! so long as we were united and independent, so long as we had a leader whom we trusted and they feared, so long the Liberal Party's policy towards Ireland and Home Rule was summed up in the phrase of Mr. Gladstone :

"Ireland blocks the way;" since the disunion, since the loss of independence, since the death of our leader, we have heard very little about Ireland blocking the way. I say there has been a distinct change of front on this question, and the motto of the Liberal Party to-day may more accurately be summed up by the phrase: "If the House of Lords rejects Home Rule, hang it up."

Ladies and gentlemen, so far back as the end of October last year—and it is surely a remarkable thing that not one of these speeches was delivered until the grave had closed over the remains of our leader—Sir William Harcourt said in a speech at Glasgow:—

"I know what the Tory plan is. They hope to wear us out by dissolutions, forced on by the House of Lords. They talk of the right of referendum on each separate measure. I think they will find themselves mistaken. In my opinion if they are trying to play the game they should have rope enough; they should be allowed to do their worst, on the whole scope and tenor of Liberal reforms, and upon all its measures, and then the time of referendum will have arrived."

What is the plain meaning of that? The plain meaning of that, which cannot be denied, is, that if the Home Rule Bill is defeated in the House of Lords, instead of appealing to the constituencies, the Liberal party would go on with the various items of their programme, and it would not be until those Liberal reforms had been dealt with by the House of Lords that the time for the dissolution and the referendum would come.

Again, Sir George Trevelyan, in a speech at Rothbury, in January this year, spoke as follows:—

"Questions such as the disestablishment of the Welsh Church, the registration for voters, local control of liquor traffic, one man one vote, district councils, and parish councils are ready for settlement, and will be dealt with by the Liberal Ministers immediately they come

into power. It had been stated that the House of Lords would throw these Bills out. All he had to say was, 'let them try.'"

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I quoted that speech the other night to Sir George Trevelyan himself in the House of Commons, and although he interrupted me and made some observations, he did not attempt to deny—although I challenged him to do so—he did not attempt to deny that what he meant by the speech was that the new Parliament, when the Liberal party returned to power, should act upon the principle of submitting all these measures to, at any rate, the House of Commons after the rejection of the Home Rule Bill by the House of Lords before going to the constituencies, or, in other words, that the policy of "Ireland blocks the way" had been given up, and the policy of hanging up the Home Rule Bill had been adopted in its place.

And, again, unfortunately, ladies and gentlemen, we have these English politicians who speak in this way about Home Rule in England patted on the back, and encouraged and backed up by leading Irish politicians in Ireland.

On this very question of the danger of hanging up Home Rule Mr. Sexton spoke in Belfast. He said on the 2nd February in this year—

"No living man (said he) can tell what may be of interest to Ireland in two or three years hence."

Well, I venture to suggest that neither in two or three years hence, nor at any future time, will it be for the interests of Ireland to have Home Rule hung up by the Liberal Party.

"It will depend"—upon what do you think?—"upon the Liberal majority in the House of Commons. It might depend upon the temper of the country. It might depend

upon"—and this was a question, remember, as to whether Ireland was to be cheated of her hopes—"it might depend upon the temper of the House of Commons—or Lords—it might depend upon a European war and Imperial complications."

So that we are in this position—that when these English politicians speak of hanging up Home Rule, so far from a protest coming from Irishmen, a voice of encouragement for the Liberal party in that new policy comes from Mr. Sexton. This danger of Home Rule being hung up, which is evident from the speeches which I have read to you, constitutes my third reason for saying that it is imperative upon us clearly to enable the electors of England to know before the General Election takes place what it is we mean by Home Rule. Now, let me briefly deal with that question. What is the national demand?

The Parliament of 1782 was not a Parliament of the Irish people. The mass of the Irish people were absolutely excluded from the franchise. That Parliament in no sense can be said to have represented the masses of the nation. It represented simply the English Pale—or the English colony as it has been called. Yet a free constitution was won for that Parliament by Henry Grattan, and such was the influence—such was the blessed influence of liberty upon the minds and souls of those Protestant gentlemen who assembled in that Parliament of 1782, that that Parliament became nationalised, and the hopes and aspirations of the most extreme Nationalists in Ireland long turned towards that Parliament with hope and with pride. All that was wanted was that that Parliament should be allowed to develop as it was developing under the influence of the breath of liberty, and eventually that Parliament would have satisfied the national demand of Ireland. Remember

this—remember that the development in that Parliament was so rapid that in the year 1793, eleven years after freedom had been given to it, that Protestant Parliament, representing as it did none of the Catholic masses of the people, commenced the work of Catholic Emancipation, granted the franchise to large masses of the Catholic people, opened the learned professions and the university to the Catholics, and if that development had not been arrested, if it had been allowed to go on, before a generation more had passed that Parliament, which began as the Parliament of the Pale, would have blossomed into the Parliament of the Irish nation, and its existence would have justified and satisfied the national demand. Remember the United Irish Society. When it was first established it was a perfectly legal and constitutional organisation, which had for its object simple Parliamentary reform and emancipation of the Catholics. And it was not until the progress of the development of that Parliament was arrested; it was not until Fitzwilliam was recalled in 1795, and the policy of conciliation trampled under foot—it was not until then that the United Irishmen Society became a revolutionary and insurrectionary organisation. I say, therefore, that Grattan's Parliament, if it had been allowed to develop as it was developing, would have satisfied the national aspiration eventually, and that the rebellion, the insurrection of 1798, was directly the result of the refusal of the policy of conciliation and the stoppage of the process of development in that Parliament.

Let me go a step further. Ever since 1800, ever since the Union robbed Ireland of that Parliament, moderate though its constitution was, the national aspiration has taken the form of repeal of the Union. Aye, and I assert without fear of contradiction, that the insurrectionary

movement of 1848, and the insurrectionary movement of 1867, were both of them the direct result of the refusal to grant the national demand for Repeal of the Union?

Now, ladies and gentlemen, when Isaac Butt founded the Home Rule movement, he proposed to substitute for Repeal a system of Federalism which many people at first sight thought was something in the nature of a compromise of the national claim. But a comparison of a Federal Parliament with Grattan's Parliament showed that it was nothing of the kind. Ladies and gentlemen, Grattan's Parliament was in name an Independent Parliament. In name it was co-ordinate in power with the Imperial Parliament, but in reality it was a dependent and a subservient Parliament, and I will tell you why. It had no power of carrying out its own decrees, because the Executive Government of the country depended for its existence—the Executive Government which had to carry out the decrees of that Parliament depended for its existence not upon the Irish Parliament at all, but upon a majority of the English Parliament.

Therefore, I say that Grattan's Parliament, though it was in name an Independent Parliament, in reality was a dependent Parliament.

The Federal Parliament which Isaac Butt proposed was a Parliament which, in name, was dependent, but in reality was independent. I am explaining in words to you what I mean. That Federal Parliament would be dependent in this sense, that it would not have been a co-ordinate Parliament with the Imperial Parliament. The Imperial Parliament which created it would have the power, in theory at any rate, to take it away, just as it had the power to give it. But while that was so in theory, that Federal Parliament, in practice and in reality, would have

been independent, because it would have had absolutely supreme power, free from any interference or control of the English Parliament, over exclusively Irish matters.

Now, in these days when Mr. Butt and his proposals are regarded as moderate compared to ours by many badly informed people, it may be interesting for me to read two or three sentences to show you what Butt demanded was absolute supremacy over Ireland in the management of Irish affairs. In 1873, in this very hall, Mr. Butt thus defined Home Rule. He said:—

“The Crown it is not proposed to affect in its prerogatives at all, the only change would be that in exclusively Irish matters it would be guided by the Irish Parliament and the Irish Ministry. In other affairs it would continue as it is at present to be guided by the advice of the Imperial Parliament. As to the Imperial Parliament, it would continue to have precisely the same supreme powers that it now possesses over all Imperial affairs just as completely as if no Irish Parliament existed. As to the Irish Parliament, it would have supreme powers over the internal affairs of Ireland just as much as if no Imperial Parliament existed. Its jurisdiction would include every exclusively Irish interest. In respect of all exclusively Irish interests this Irish Parliament would rank and rule as the Parliament of an independent nation.”

Now, ladies and gentlemen, that in my opinion contains the essence of the national demand of Ireland at this moment. It contains every single one of the demands which Mr. Parnell made in what Sir William Harcourt says the Liberal party will never give us, namely, in Mr. Parnell’s scheme of “Fenian Home Rule.”

On the 25th of June last year Mr. Parnell spoke thus at Waterford:—

“The Liberal Party,” said he, “and Mr. Gladstone know what Ireland wants, there can be no mistake about it, that we want a Parliament with full power to manage the affairs of Ireland without trenching on any Imperial prerogative, or injuring any Imperial or

English interest, but a Parliament we must have that will be supreme with regard to Irish affairs. We will have no English veto. An English veto, whether upon the appointment of your leader or on the laws of your Parliament, would break down that Parliament before it had been two years in existence. The Irish question is plain and simple. It is now known to all men that what we want is that, when our Parliament has been restored to us, the elected representatives of the people shall have power to make laws for Ireland, and that there shall be no English veto upon those laws except the constitutional veto of the Crown, exercised in the same way as it is exercised by the Crown in the Imperial Parliament. Then, as regards the civil power, there shall be no Imperial police, there shall be no military police, but the future police of Ireland shall be under the control of the Executive of the Irish Parliament, and shall be a civil not a military force. Now there has been great difficulty and great trouble for the last hundred years over the land question, and one great argument in favour of Home Rule has been that the Imperial Parliament has never been able to understand or settle the land question. But what would you think of offering us a Parliament which reserved to the Imperial Parliament the solution of the very question which it had always shown itself unable to settle? That would be a mockery, a delusion, and a snare, and we claim if this question is unsettled when Home Rule is given to us, and when our Parliament is restored to us, that the land question, as well as every other question, should be left to the settlement of the Irish Parliament."

Ladies and gentlemen, this is the last extract that I will trouble you with, for that speech of Mr. Parnell was reduced into definite form in the Constitution which was adopted by the great National Convention held in July in the Leinster Hall. This Constitution was, and I am glad to be reminded of it, settled, every word of it, by Mr. Parnell's own hand. Here is his definition of it :—

"The restitution to the Irish people of the right to manage their own affairs in a Parliament elected by the people of Ireland. This Parliament shall have full power over all the affairs of Ireland, including the laws relating to the ownership and occupation of land, and all laws enacted by it shall be subject only to the veto of the Crown or the representative of the Crown in Ireland. The Irish Executive shall be dependent upon this Parliament, and shall have control over

the Constabulary as well as the appointment of all judges and magistrates, and the statutory power of the Lord Lieutenant to raise, equip, maintain, and control the Constabulary, shall be repealed."

Now, ladies and gentlemen, these extracts plainly point to what we mean by the national demand, and it is not necessary for me to point out to you how essentially they differ from what seems to have been in the minds of Mr. Fowler, Sir Wm. Harcourt, and other English politicians whose words I have quoted. I do not propose to labour that definition of Home Rule. The question of the land, the question of the police, the question of the judiciary, are all contained in that one vital provision, namely, that the Irish Parliament shall be supreme in the management of Irish affairs.

Let me say one word to make perfectly plain what I mean by that supremacy. I admit that the Imperial Parliament will remain supreme in Imperial affairs; more than that, I admit that in the strict theory of the Constitution the Imperial Parliament would remain supreme also in reference to this particular, that the Irish Parliament having been created by it, it would retain the power, in theory at any rate, to take that Parliament away, just as it had the power to give it.

Therefore, I say that, so far as the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament is concerned, in theory it would remain supreme because we would not interfere, or want to interfere in Imperial matters beyond the interference of our Members in the Imperial Parliament, and it would, of course, not abrogate—it would have no power to abrogate—any of the powers which it possesses at the present moment. You may remember that, when the Union was being passed, the most powerful arguments used against it was that the Irish Parliament was not competent, that it had not the

power to destroy any of its own attributes or powers. That may fairly be claimed by the Imperial Parliament. What we say is that, while an Irish Parliament exists in Ireland, it shall be absolutely supreme in the management of every Irish affair, for the system whereby the Imperial Parliament would bring up all its acts for revision or discussion would be disastrous and dishonourable.

It would be the re-introduction in another form of Poyning's Act, which for many weary generations prevented the old Irish Parliament from exercising any freedom of thought or discussion. Therefore we say, and this is our ultimatum, this is our irreducible minimum on this question—the Irish Parliament must be supreme—absolutely supreme—free from interference or control in the management of the affairs of Ireland, so long as that Irish Parliament exists.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, these are the main and vital features of the Home Rule problem. On the question of finance, on questions of detail, no doubt there will be ample room for accommodation, for arrangement, and for compromise. On the vital principle of the supremacy of the Irish Parliament in Irish affairs there can be no compromise without disaster and dishonour, and I am clearly of opinion that it is a duty which we owe to our country and ourselves, a duty which we owe alike to the memory of the dead and the hopes of the living, to let these English electors know clearly, before this momentous General Election takes place, that no man and no set of men who will speak for Ireland will dare to palter for one instant with the sacred principle that it is the inalienable and God-given right of this country to rule herself in her own affairs, free from interference or control by the people of any other nation upon earth.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I have finished. I have fulfilled as well as I could the task which I set before myself at the commencement. In conclusion, I desire to say that notwithstanding the disasters and dishonours of the year that has passed, I still believe that we are advancing on the road to a final victory for our cause. When that hour of victory comes, the thoughts of countless thousands all over the world will turn to that silent grave in Glasnevin, and our people, whatever their present divisions may be, will then recognise and acknowledge, with tears of mingled gratitude and remorse, how much Ireland owes to the matchless brain and the gallant heart of the man who lifted her up from the dust and led her to the very threshold of liberty.

*SPEECH IN THE ACADEMY OF MUSIC,
NEW YORK.*

15TH JUNE, 1892.

JUDGE LYNN IN THE CHAIR.

XVII.

MR. CHAIRMAN, ladies and gentlemen :—It is with mixed feelings that I stand here to-night to address this magnificent assembly of Irishmen and Irishwomen of New York. The pride and the pleasure which it must be to an Irish politician to stand amongst the Irishmen of America is in my case damped by the consciousness, which I cannot overcome, of the change which has come over the fortunes and prospects of Ireland since last I stood on an American platform.

Fellow-countrymen, when I was last here, Ireland was advancing mid the applause of the nations of the world calmly, confidently, and securely towards the achievement of her rights. The ear of the civilized world at last had opened to her story. The anti-Irish prejudice which so long enslaved and degraded her people had been conquered and destroyed. The jarring factions which for so long a time made the very name of Ireland a by-word with the nations had disappeared, and by the strength, the unity, the calmness, and the dignity of our national movement we had made our national demands respected and admitted by the world.

There was not an Irishman in any part, I believe, of the

habitable world who did not in some shape or form feel the blessed influence of the movement of the last ten years in Ireland. The entire Irish race was by that movement elevated, and the future of our country seemed to have been secured. All that was the work of one man. All that was the work of one masterly, cool, and far-seeing brain, of one dauntless and unpurchasable heart. Parnell taught Irishmen to unite. Parnell taught Irishmen self-respect and self-reliance.

Parnell taught the doctrine that, judged by every test which goes to make up a nation, we Irishmen were the equals of those Englishmen who sought to be our masters. He fought, and even when he had but a band of men less than a score by his side, he defeated one after the other each of the great English political parties, and finally he brought one of these great English parties to admit the justice of our claim. This was the position when last I stood on an American platform. What is the position to-day? The national unity has been destroyed, the national party is distracted, the national hopes are jeopardized, the national leader is dead; the man who made Ireland respected, the man who made Ireland united, respected, and feared is gone, rudely torn in the pride of his manhood from the service of his country. His place to-day is empty, and the distracted Irish national party looks in vain around for any man fit to take that place.

Ireland at this moment, maddened by sorrow and remorse, torn by passion and distracted by warring sections, is in danger of losing once more the respect of the nations of the world and the fruition of her hopes. Small wonder, then, ladies and gentlemen, if my feelings in rising to speak here to-night are of a mixed character. Small wonder if my pride and pleasure at your greeting are mingled

with feelings of deep humiliation and pain. I have, however, this one consolation ; it is just within the bounds of possibility that the opportunity afforded to me by this meeting to-night may be so utilized as to hasten in some small degree the day when the national unity will be once more restored to our country.

In all I have to say to you, ladies and gentlemen, this will be my guiding motive. I propose to divide my address into two portions, first, I intend to deal with this question of national unity, and while I have no desire to go back over the heart-breaking and humiliating incidents of the last eighteen months in Ireland, at the same time I feel bound in justice to myself and to my absent colleagues to vindicate them and myself from the accusation which has been made against us in this country, of having been the men responsible for breaking the national unity which existed in the year 1890. I propose then to show you that we were not the men responsible originally for breaking that union, and that we are not the men responsible for continuing the disunion ever since. And I propose to explain to you the fair and reasonable basis upon which we, the followers of Mr. Parnell, propose to bring that disunion to an end.

And then, ladies and gentlemen, in the second portion of my address I intend very briefly to emphasize the necessity which I believe exists for the continuance in the English Parliament of a party of Irish politicians absolutely unpledged to, and absolutely independent of, every English political party. And I propose shortly to tell you in a few sentences what it is that we mean by the phrase "Home Rule for Ireland."

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I propose to deal with these two portions of my subject separately ; and I am afraid that

it will be necessary for me to go into some details, and perhaps to weary some of you. But I desire to give chapter and verse for every statement that I make. I desire that my statements shall go forth with authority behind them, and that I may be able to prove my propositions beyond the possibility of doubt, and if, in the process of doing so, I weary your patience to some extent, I will ask you to remember how serious a matter this is, and of what grave concern it is to Ireland that all the facts about the present situation should be understood here in this land of America.

The followers of Mr. Parnell have been accused of having been the men responsible for breaking the national unity. I assert here to-night, and I will prove my words, that it was our political opponents in Ireland, and not Mr. Parnell's followers, who originally broke the national unity which existed.

Now, let me shortly prove that statement. In November, 1890, Ireland was united, her people at home and abroad were united under the leadership of Mr. Parnell. Suddenly that union, on a particular hour of a particular day, was broken. Who broke it? It has been said that it was broken by the lamentable proceedings in the Divorce Court in England, I say that statement as a matter of historical fact is notoriously untrue. During two whole weeks after these proceedings in the London Divorce Court, Ireland remained united; the proceedings in that court were discussed in public and in private in every Irish circle; and at the end of that fortnight's discussion I assert here, as a matter of historical fact, that the whole Irish people at home, so far as they had spoken, had declared with one voice that in their opinion the continuance of Mr. Parnell's leadership was necessary for the welfare of Ireland. This public opinion was not a mere chance expression. Great

conventions of the people, great meetings of the delegates representing the clergy and the laity were held in Ireland during that fortnight in half a dozen Irish counties, in the counties of Louth, of Meath, of Galway, of King's, of Carlow, and in other places. At some of these conventions as many as thirty and forty clergymen were present ; and at all of those conventions resolutions were passed declaring that Parnell should be retained.

Then in the largest hall in the City of Dublin, the Leinster Hall, in as vast an assembly as that which I am addressing here to-night, an assembly with the leading men of Ireland on the platform, with very nearly half the national Parliamentary party upon the stage, this matter was discussed by Mr. McCarthy and by Mr. Healy, by all the leading men, and a cablegram was read from the Irish delegates in America, from Mr. Dillon, Mr. O'Brien and others, to the following effect :—

“ We stand firmly by the leadership of the man who has brought the Irish people through unparalleled difficulties and dangers, from servitude and despair to the very threshold of emancipation, with a genius, courage, and success unequalled in our history. We do so in the profound conviction that his qualities as a leader are essential to the safety of the Irish cause.”

At that meeting Mr. Justin M'Carthy proposed the principal resolution, viz. :—

“ That this meeting, interpreting the sentiment of the Irish people that no side issues shall be permitted to obstruct the progress of the great cause of Home Rule for Ireland, declares that in all political matters Mr. Parnell possesses the confidence of the Irish nation, and rejoices at the determination of the Irish Parliamentary Party to stand by their leader.”

In support of the resolution he said :—

“ I want you to consider what is the position, what is the duty of

the Irish Party at the present moment. I am not thinking especially or alone of Mr. Parnell. I am thinking of the Irish cause and the Irish people, I am thinking of what the Irish Party ought to do. I am thinking of what they owe to you, the Irish people, what they owe to your past, what they owe to your future, what they owe to the cause we all have at heart, and how we shall best further the great purpose of that cause in the future; and I therefore ask you whether, having found through those past years the leader of consummate skill, of absolute devotion, a man who can lead us as nobody was ever able to lead any Irish cause, a man who has raised the Irish cause beyond the level—I speak in a practical sense—to which it was raised by Grattan and O'Connell; I ask you are we going to change that man, to say that we will set up some wholly inferior man because some of the Tories and some of the Liberal Secessionist newspapers say that man has gone wrong? I am speaking as a practical politician. I don't care about sentiment. I want to win our great cause. I am concerned for the cause of Ireland and the cause of the people of Ireland, for the tenant farmers, for the peasant, for our own great superb traditions, and for our Irish Home Rule. . . . Then I ask you are we, as rational human beings, are we going to give up that great leader, to lose the force of his capacity, his energy, his genius, his perseverance, his resource? Are we going, for any personal cause whatever, to lose, to throw away the power of that great man in leading our Parliamentary battle? No, most certainly not. His duty—a duty from which he cannot possibly escape—is to lead us in that great battle, and our duty—a duty from which we cannot possibly escape—is to maintain him as our leader in that great battle.”

Mr. T. M. Healy, M.P., seconded the resolution, and in the course of a vigorous speech said:—

“For Ireland and for Irishmen, Mr. Parnell is less a man than an institution. We have under the shadow of his name secured for Ireland a power and an authority in the councils of Great Britain and the world such as we never possessed before; and when I see a demand made for retirement and resignation I ask them (our English friends) to remember the futility thereof. I am no man's man but Ireland's and if I stand here to-night to second this resolution, as I gladly do, I do so, not for the sake of Parnell as an individual, but for the sake of Ireland as a nation. We are not sentimental politicians. We have no room for sentiment. I think if it existed in our souls the ten years that we have gone through would have pretty well driven it out. But

I say this, that when we have had a prolonged experience, and when we have seen victory after victory achieved by our leader, while I subscribe to the Napoleonic doctrine that no man is indispensable, I say, yet it would be criminal on our part, it would be criminal—aye, it would be absurd and foolish in the highest degree, were we at a moment like this, because of a temporary outcry over a case that in London would be forgotten to-morrow, if there were a repetition of the Whitechapel murders, or some more scandals from the Gold Coast connected with Mr. Stanley's voyages, I say we would be foolish and criminal if we, the seasoned politicians who have seen and who have been able to watch the vagaries and tempests of political passion, if we upon an occasion of this kind, at the very first blast of opposition, surrendered the great chief who has led us so far forward. . . . And if the Irish people for whom he has done so much, for whom he has braved so much and suffered so much, if they were so frivolous and light-headed as to permit themselves at the first sound of this wretched and unfortunate case to be dragged away from the support they have hitherto accorded Mr. Parnell, all I can say is that this Irish nation would be my nation no more. . . . For my part I decline to take the cork out of the soda water bottle to see the 'fiz.' I am satisfied with the National Party, and by the National Party and the National Leader I shall abide. Let me, however, say this: that while we owe a duty to Mr. Parnell, Mr. Parnell owes a duty to us. We have stood by Mr. Parnell. Mr. Parnell must stand by us. . . . I will at a time of crisis and stress and struggle recommend to you and those outside the weather-beaten monition, 'You are requested not to speak to the man at the wheel.' "

All this time, remember, it was not as if there were a divided nation, for, during that fortnight, no single voice of layman or clergyman was raised in Ireland to the contrary, and at the end of the fortnight the Irish party assembled in London, and by their unanimous vote re-elected Mr. Parnell as their leader. It is therefore not true to say that the national unity was broken by the Divorce Court proceedings.

What broke it? The very day upon which Mr. Parnell was re-elected, while the vows of devotion and loyalty to him were still warm upon the lips of his colleagues, within two hours after his unanimous re-election, at the word of command from the captain of another army, at the

word of command from the leader of another political party, Mr. Parnell was attacked by a number of his own followers, and then and there and thus the national unity was broken.

Gentlemen, whoever else is responsible for breaking that unity, we, at any rate, who, when we told our leader and our friend that it was his duty to stand firm, meant what we said, and afterwards stood by what we said—we, at any rate, can never in the pages of history be charged with the responsibility of having broken the national unity.

Now, I pass to the next point, and having shown that we were not responsible for originally breaking the unity, I proceed to show that we have not been responsible for the continuance of disunion ever since; and I assert that repeatedly, during the eighteen months that have passed, we have made effort after effort to restore the unity of the Irish people, and that every effort of ours was thwarted and rejected by the very men whose friends in America to-day say that we are the men responsible for disunion in our country.

Now, let me prove that statement. Many of us felt, ladies and gentlemen, that while it was impossible at once, after the great political earthquake which had taken place in Ireland, to restore exactly the same surface to the political world in a moment, at the same time we believed that there were certain questions upon which both sections could, and both sections ought, at once to unite; and we believed that if we were brought together upon one side issue and then upon another side issue, that eventually the chasm would be bridged over and unity restored. I take an example. I myself held a very strong view that it was the duty of Irishmen of all sections to unite in an effort to obtain the release of a number of our countrymen who,

however foolish and regrettable their methods may have been, still were Irishmen suffering for the same old cause for which our fathers fought and died.

And, ladies and gentlemen, we started an amnesty movement in Ireland; and my colleagues and I appealed to the leaders of the anti-Parnellites in the country to sink their differences at any rate upon this broad and sacred platform of amnesty, and come in and join hands with us in our efforts. How was our attempt at union met? I hold here in my hand the written answer sent by Mr. John Dillon. In that answer he says that—

“Though I am strongly in favour of Amnesty, I cannot be present at your meetings, because”——

(listen to the words of this apostle of reunion and peace)

“because (he said) I cannot consent to stand upon the same platform with the Parliamentary supporters of Mr. John Redmond, who, in my opinion, are in my deliberate judgment the most dangerous enemies of the Irish cause.”

Now, ladies and gentlemen, there was our first effort at peace; there was our first effort at union, and there was the result. Let me state our second effort.

There was another cause in Ireland to which all sections were equally pledged. There was a large body of the evicted tenants in Ireland who left their homes on the promise of support given to them by a united party. Whoever else was responsible for the Irish crisis they were not, and we felt that it was the duty of all sections to unite in an effort to support these tenants and their families.

How was our effort met? First of all, our opponents, in what some of you will probably think was a very summary

fashion, walked into the office of the organisation of these tenants, and walked away with the books and papers and accounts, and gave instructions to the officials to refuse any information about these tenants to any supporter of Mr. Parnell. Well, we were not daunted even by that repulse. The tenants in Tipperary came to me, came to Dublin to see me, and they asked me to urge upon the other side to have a joint delegation from both sides to go down and give encouragement and assistance to their friends, and I consented to go, and I said I would go with any of our opponents, and a meeting was arranged; but at the last moment the leaders of our opponents forbade any of their followers to attend the meeting, and the result was that the Tipperary tenants were deprived of the united advice and assistance of both sections.

And then, not content with having made these two unsuccessful efforts, we made a third. Our opponents started a fund, which they called the "National Fund," and they asked subscriptions to it for the evicted tenants, but it came to our knowledge that the fund was for a double purpose—for the tenants, it is true, but also to be used in part as a political campaign fund against us, and we appealed again and again to our opponents to take that political aspect away from this fund, and to enable us to join with them in its collection. But they refused, and I have here in my hand extracts from no less than three speeches made on different occasions by myself, in which I appealed with all the force at my command to our opponents in God's name, and for the sake of the starving wives and children of these tenants, to join hands with us, and to make a united appeal.

I will just read for you an extract from the last of those speeches. I said:—

"No money is coming from abroad for the tenants, and I am sorry to say that in my opinion none will until there is a united appeal made by both sections of the party. For my part, no bitterness, no personal feeling will be allowed to stand between me and any section of men who will co-operate with me for the aid of these tenants. It is not yet too late. I, to-day, again repeat my appeal to Mr. Dillon. Let him have his National Fund for political purposes; let him keep, aye, every penny of it; but let him start a fund purely for the evicted tenants; let him pledge himself before the world that it will be used solely for those tenants; let both sides to the controversy unite in support of that fund, and I believe the fund will be a success in Ireland, and, more than that, I believe a united effort of that sort would bring funds from abroad, from America and Australia."

Now, ladies and gentlemen, there was the third effort that we made to bridge over this chasm, to try and find in our efforts for union some piece of common ground upon which both sections should stand; but each one of these appeals was rejected in turn, and every effort that we made to restore union was repulsed with asperity, indeed, I might almost say with insult, by our opponents.

Now, I claim to have proved to you not only that we are not responsible for breaking the union originally, but that we are not responsible for its continuance, but, on the contrary, that we have repeatedly made efforts at peace and that all our efforts have been rejected. But many of you may be inclined to say to me, this is all ancient history. Well, ladies and gentlemen, I have gone into it for the reason that I mentioned at the commencement, because I and my friends have been villified and misrepresented in this matter, and I felt it my duty to vindicate my colleagues and myself from the accusation made against us. However, I desire now to come to the present.

Is there now, now at the last hour, no possibility of bringing the National forces into one body again in Ireland? Ladies and gentlemen, we are upon the eve of,

perhaps, the most momentous General Election ever held this century in Great Britain. The fortunes of Ireland will be hanging in the balance, in every polling booth in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, and we know that the spectacle of a divided Ireland must necessarily have an injurious effect upon the cause of Ireland in these British elections, and, consequently, we desire, and from the bottom of my heart I desire, that now at the eleventh hour some means may be found to prevent the scandal of conflicts between Nationalists for Irish seats. Now, what are the chances of that, and what do we propose?

Forgive me, I beg of you, if I have the appearance by reading extracts and going into details of desiring to weary your patience. But this is an all important matter. I am here in a responsible capacity, and I must be guarded, I must be careful and precise in what I say.

Ladies and gentlemen, the first proposal for anything in the nature of a union for the General Election was made in a public speech about two months ago by a leading member of our opponents' party, namely, Mr. T. P. O'Connor. He made the speech that I hold in my hand, in which he said that an Irish party ought to be representative of all sections and shades of Nationalists, and he went on to say that Home Rule would not be worth having if its achievement were regarded by a section of Irishmen as the triumph of a party and not the triumph of a nation.

And he went on to make a proposal for peace. He said—these are his words:—

“I then am for a policy of conciliation, of kindness”—

And I beg you will mark the words—

“For a policy of fair and proportionate representation for those of our countrymen who differ from us over the election of Mr. Parnell.”

Now, ladies and gentlemen, the moment that speech was made, I at once answered it by a speech in Dublin, in which, speaking for my colleagues and myself, I said if that be the sentiment of your party we reciprocate it. If that be your proposal, we accept it.

During the elections that have been held in Ireland since this trouble arose two-fifths of the entire votes cast were cast for the Parnellite candidates. Those elections were held in places—except in one instance—in places notoriously hostile to our party. They were held at a time when religious and moral considerations were clouding the political judgment of the people. And yet, in unfavourable places, and at an unfavourable time, we polled two-fifths of the entire vote cast. Now, that proportion would give to us on a scheme of proportionate representation a larger number of members than we possess at present. But we did not desire to press that claim; we did not ask for the full proportionate representation to which we were entitled. We would have been entitled to some thirty-eight seats on that principle; we only hold twenty-nine; but we said we are content to accept the principle of your proposal, and if you will agree to leave our twenty-nine seats unattacked, we will leave the remainder of the seats which you hold unattacked; we will both go back to the next Parliament in the same position in which we now stand, and then when the Home Rule Bill of the Liberal party is produced, we can all unite either in support of it, if it be a good one, or in rejection of it, if it be a bad one.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, remember what followed. Immediately a speech was made in Dublin by Mr. Healy. I have his remarks here in my hand. He at once denounced the proposal of Mr. O'Connor, and he denounced Mr. O'Connor for making it. He said :—

"So far as I am concerned I desire at the very earliest opportunity, so far as my voice, vote, and opinion are concerned, to say that my voice, my vote, and opinion will be irrevocably cast against any such policy as that."

And he went on to say that:—

"In my judgment nothing more fatal could be put forward than any attempt to patch up a hollow and hypocritical peace of any sort whatever."

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I say here to-night that Mr. Healy and his friends are the only people of the Irish race in any part of the world who are to-day standing between Ireland and peace. His efforts to kill Mr. O'Connor's proposal were successful. I hold a speech here in my hand from which I must quote, but I do so, believe me, with pain and humiliation, because it pains and humiliates me to find the position which, in contradiction to his own better judgment, Mr. William O'Brien was forced to take upon this matter.

Speaking immediately after Mr. Healy's declaration, Mr. O'Brien said that Mr. O'Connor's proposal had been made—now listen to his words:—

"With the full approval of the chairman of the Irish Party, and of seven out of the nine members of the committee of the Irish Party, it was abandoned in consequence of the hostility of one of our colleagues—Mr. Healy."

Mr. O'Brien further said:—

"We agree to drop hostilities on our part if our opponents would drop hostilities upon their part," and he goes on to say that he is "convinced that such a settlement as that would have been received with joy in Ireland," and he says "we have the best reason to know that it would have been received with joy and approval and enthusiasm by our most powerful friends in the United States of America."

But what an unconscious sarcasm there was in his own words. He says:—

“For the sake of national harmony, finding that the idea received opposition from such an influential colleague as Mr. Healy, we were obliged to abandon the idea.”

But he goes on to say:—

“All I would respectfully submit to my countrymen is this, that on a matter of this sort, a matter of judgment and of policy, that with every deference to Mr. Healy’s great authority in the country where his judgment goes in one direction, and the judgment of Mr. McCarthy in the opposite direction, and the judgment of Mr. Sexton, Mr. Dillon, Mr. T. P. O’Connor, Mr. David Sheehy, and Mr. William Abraham and myself all go in the opposite direction, that at all events we are entitled to claim, and our countrymen will believe, that we did not make any hasty proposal.”

Now, ladies and gentlemen, think for one moment what this means. Here you sometimes hear clap-trap talked in connection with this question about the majority ruling. Here is a Parliamentary Committee supposed to govern on the part of our opponents. Here you have seven, including Messrs. McCarthy, Sexton, Dillon, O’Brien, and T. P. O’Connor, all in favour of this proposal, and you have one man, Mr. Healy, opposing it; and yet the very first men to talk about the virtue of the majority ruling they allow a minority of one to rule them as he likes, and “for the sake of national harmony,” to please Mr. Healy, national disunion must be continued.

Our position to-day is perfectly plain. We desire union—we desire union upon the lines which Mr. T. P. O’Connor laid down in that speech, and which Mr. O’Brien admits that he and Messrs. Dillon and Sexton and McCarthy approved of.

Before leaving Ireland I made that proposal again. I said, give us the representation as it is and we will have peace in Ireland, and what is the answer I got? They

have now squared Mr. Healy; they have squared him to this extent: He will not agree to have peace upon fair terms all around; but, if you please, he says he will be graciously pleased to allow ten, or twelve at a stretch, of Mr. Parnell's followers to be returned if they will agree that seventy-six of the seats shall be given to their opponents. In other words, while they are not to be asked to sacrifice anything, we are to be asked to take twenty of our colleagues whose only political crime is that they stood by the pledges which they gave to their leader in the face of the world—that we are to take twenty of our colleagues, drive them out of public life, and offer them as a propitiatory sacrifice to Mr. Healy's desire for vengeance.

Our position is clear. We do not ask for any victims. We do not ask the other side to turn out of public life any of their members. We do not ask, we do not even make it a condition of peace, that that man shall be driven out of public life who publicly declared that his object was “to drive Parnell into the grave or a lunatic asylum.” We do not ask the sacrifice of anyone. We say let them all go back; but we demand that some measure of fair play shall be extended to us. We demand that, if they go back, we should go back.

We are willing for peace, and we are anxious for it; but we will not permit ourselves to be driven out of public life by Mr. Healy.

The position, therefore, is this: Peace now at this eleventh hour, peace, even yet, may be obtained if the real views of Messrs. Dillon and O'Brien and the others are permitted to have sway. Peace may yet be restored if Mr. Healy is not permitted to rule the destinies of his party. If a policy of fair play all round is adopted, we will gladly ground our arms; but if a policy of vengeance is adopted

towards our party, then we say that we are conscious of having done no wrong as Irish Nationalists in our lives, that we are conscious of having done our duty as men, and that if there is not to be peace we will fight it out. And I confidently appeal to you here to-night, if we are not permitted to have peace, if this fight is forced upon us, then I confidently appeal to you to-night to stand behind us and not permit us to be driven from public life.

Ladies and gentlemen, allow me now very briefly to recapitulate the heads of the first portion of my address. I claim to have proved to you that Mr. Parnell's followers were not responsible for breaking the unity of the Irish race. Secondly, I claim to have proved to you that during the last eighteen months we made several efforts to restore peace, and that all these efforts were rejected and thwarted by our opponents. Thirdly, I claim to have proved that we are to-day willing, anxious for peace and unity, upon fair and honourable terms, but that we are not prepared to permit ourselves to be driven out of Irish public life. And fourthly, I claim to have shown to you that the real sentiment of Messrs. Dillon, O'Brien, Sexton, M'Carthy, T. P. O'Connor, are all in favour of stopping hostilities, and that the only men standing between Ireland and peace are Mr. Healy and his friends.

Allow me now very briefly to turn to the second portion of my speech. Ladies and gentlemen, we believe that, if a truce could be accomplished in Ireland to-day, the Home Rule Bill of Mr. Gladstone would afford an admirable basis for a fusion of all sections of our race in the near future. It is the interest of every Irishman, of every Nationalist Irishman, that Mr. Gladstone should be returned to power and as soon as possible. The accusation against me and my friends—that we desire to keep Mr. Gladstone out of

power—is so childish and absurd that I wonder it has imposed upon anybody. It is manifestly the interest of every Nationalist that a chance should be afforded to the Liberal party of redeeming, if they are willing to do so, the pledges which they have given to the Irish people. Our position, ladies and gentlemen, on this Home Rule question is perfectly plain.

Now, possibly, in what I am going to say some of you may differ from me ; but I would like to argue this matter calmly for a moment with you. We do not believe in the wisdom of accepting a half measure of Home Rule.

Ladies and gentlemen, the English people who are going to vote for Home Rule for Ireland, a great majority of them, regard this Home Rule merely in the light of an experiment. They have not, most of them, admitted the right which we set up, the inalienable and God-given right that we claim, of every nation to rule itself. They regard it merely as an experiment. They say, we admit that we have governed Ireland badly and unsuccessfully, and we admit you have had wrongs to complain of, and we admit most thoroughly that you have made yourselves a nuisance and danger to our Parliament, and for these good and weighty reasons we are inclined to try the experiment of seeing whether you would govern yourselves any better. Now, I believe, that Ireland's whole right to self-government will be judged by the English people by the result of that experiment. If the experiment be a success, then the safety of our Parliament is assured ; if the experiment be a failure, the Parliament which fails will be taken back again from us by the superior force of England, and then good-bye for a century to any chance of obtaining self-government for our people.

This is purely a matter of argument. I believe if we accepted a Parliament which was bound hand and foot by

restrictions, a Parliament which would not have the power of ruling our country in purely Irish affairs free from the meddlesome and ignorant interference of English politicians, I believe that Parliament would be a failure. I believe it would be taken from us again, and, therefore, I say I believe it would be the height of unwisdom for Ireland to accept as a settlement of her claims anything less than a full, honest, and free Parliament.

On this matter there is a divergence of opinion in Ireland. In a speech made—a famous speech as it has become—made in the town of Bandon recently by Mr. Michael Davitt, he declared—I have his words here—he declared that if three millions of Nationalists in Ireland were not able to get from thirty millions of Britishers all that they wanted, he said,

“I for one will be satisfied to accept all that the Liberal party may offer us.”

Well, now, there is a complete, a distinct difference of opinion and policy between us in that matter, and for the reasons that I have explained to you. But do not imagine, ladies and gentlemen, that we are making any extravagant demand when we ask for a free Parliament. We are conducting a constitutional movement, as you know, within the lines of the Constitution; therefore, we are not asking for any violation of constitutional limits. What we are asking is, first of all, that there shall be no veto on the laws passed by that Irish Parliament in purely Irish matters except the veto of the Crown, similar to the veto of the Crown as it exists in relation to the legislatures of Canada and Australia.

Now, the veto is in an entirely different position in your American Constitution to what it is in Great Britain. The way the veto stands in Great Britain is this, that in strict

theory the Sovereign has the right to veto a law, but that veto has not been exercised in that way for nearly two hundred years, and there has grown up a usage in the British Constitution, which has become a law of the Constitution like all our laws, as you know there is no written Constitution in Great Britain. The Constitution is made up of a number of unwritten laws, and one of the unwritten laws of the Constitution of to-day is that that veto of the Crown must be exercised in accordance with the advice of the Ministers of the day.

Now, we say that the only veto of purely Irish laws that we will admit as governing our Irish Parliament is the veto of the Crown, exercised in accordance with the advice of the Irish Ministers and the Irish Cabinet, responsible, of course, to a majority of the Irish legislature. It is true that there will be another check, and we do not object to it, one similar to what exists in your own Constitution. We, of course, should get a Parliament with powers only within certain limits, and there must be some tribunal to decide as to whether laws passed by that Parliament are *ultra vires*—that is, outside the limits of the powers given to it; and we are content that the question of *ultra vires* should be decided by some tribunal like the Supreme Court of the United States, which, as I understand the Constitution, decides upon the constitutionality of the Acts passed by your State legislatures.

Now, gentlemen, that is not a wide proposal, that is a modest proposal; but less than that—I say here to-night—less than that the Nationalists of Ireland will never accept as a settlement of their claims.

Now, we claim in addition, that the present police force in Ireland should be disbanded.

Just consider for a moment that in your great and free

country, with your sixty-five millions of people, you have a standing army of about 25,000 men, I think. We, in our country, with a population of less than five millions, have a standing army in the shape of an armed police force of more than one-half of the entire standing army of America.

We say that that force must be disbanded. It is a badge of conquest; it is a standing menace, an insult to the nation. It must be disbanded, and a civil police, such as your civil police here, must be created, and that civil police must be placed under the control of the Irish legislature.

We claim that the Irish land question, which in one shape or another has been the cause of almost every man and woman in this hall, or their fathers before them, leaving the shores of their country—that land question which has driven the Irish race all over the world, and which has meant starvation, and ruin, and degradation, and crime for our people, that land question which the English Parliament has tried again and again to settle, and has always failed to settle—we demand that that land question shall be placed under the control of the Irish people and of their Parliament.

We claim that the appointment of the judges, that the appointment of the magistrates who are to administer the law and make it respected, what it has never been under English rule in Ireland—that they shall owe their appointment to the native authorities, and not to the Ministers of England.

Now, these are our demands, and when we say we shall insist on a full measure of Home Rule, we do not mean any more than that; but I tell you again, less than that we will never accept.

And, fellow-countrymen, it is because we believe that, to achieve that kind of a Parliament, an independent Irish party is necessary in the English Parliament, that my friends and I, come weal, come woe, are determined to stand by the principle of independence in Irish politics.

Fellow-countrymen, we are willing to be in a friendly alliance with any English party that will concede our rights; but we refuse to merge our forces in any English party, no matter how friendly it may appear. We are not prepared to barter away our independence to obtain any pledges, or to obtain any promises from any English statesman. We believe that nothing will eventually be won for Ireland in this matter by any political party which is not in a position to turn around at a moment's notice and to strike down any English party, no matter how friendly it may have been, if it becomes the interests of Ireland to do so.

I have been for eleven years in the English Parliament. When I went in there I joined a party of about a score of men. We had the open hostility of every English party—Whigs, Tories, Radicals, Republicans, Conservatives, who, differing on every point of policy, were always ready to unite against us; but if they were ready to unite against us, we put our backs to the wall, and we fought each of them in turn, and in the end we drove from power by our votes, first the Tory party, and then the Liberal party—we did it by independence. Our power was not in our numbers—twenty against six hundred. Our power lay in our absolute disregard of any interests save the interests of Ireland; our power lay in the fact that the English parties never knew upon what side we would vote. We were independents, and our votes always hung in the balance; and I say that our power as twenty men was greater far than would be

the power of eighty-six united Nationalists who were prepared on the purely Irish question of the Irish leadership to obey the orders of an English statesman.

Fellow-countrymen, I have now come to the end of what I have to say to you. I hope that you will agree with me when I say that I have spoken temperately, if firmly; that I have endeavoured to make my meaning plain, and our position clear; that we desire peace, but that we will not permit ourselves to be offered up as a sacrifice to Mr. Healy's desire for vengeance.

Fellow-countrymen, I take it that this great meeting is in favour of union. But I ask you now, and I demand an answer from you, are you in favour of those men whose only crime is that they stood by Mr. Parnell being driven out of public life?

I hold in my hand a cable dispatch which I have received to-day from my friend and colleague who has been negotiating on the lines I have sketched out to you for peace; I mean Mr. Harrington. Here is his cable:—

“Dublin, June 15th. Every proposal of ours for peace has now been rejected, and the Whigs are determined to expel from public life every man who stood by Parnell.”

I ask you, are you in favour of that? (Cries of “No, no.”) Then I call upon you, I demand from you, if you are in earnest, if you have not come here to hoodwink and to humbug me—I demand from you, if you are in earnest, and if this fight is forced upon us, to assist us to resist this attempt on the part of Mr. Healy to drive us out of Parliament.

Fellow-countrymen, sons and daughters of Ireland, my last words to you to-night will be *sursum corda*, lift up your heart. The road to freedom has ever been a long and

rough one in the history of every nation upon earth. Ireland has suffered too much; Ireland has encountered too many defeats and disappointments during the long and dreary ages that have passed for her to be disheartened now, because a few obstacles have suddenly arisen in her path just as she thought that she stood on the threshold of victory. Your great American poet has sung:—

“Let us be patient. These severe afflictions do not
from the ground arise,
Oft-times Celestial benedictions assume this dark
disguise.”

Let us have faith in the destiny of our land. Let us learn from the misfortunes, and the disappointments, and the heart-burnings of to-day, the lessons of fortitude, of constancy, and of toleration of one another. The clouds that hang over our cause to-day may seem to many of you dark and impenetrable, but what are they compared with the long and starless nights that brooded over Ireland when our fathers and our fathers' fathers never for one instant lost faith in the ultimate triumph of our cause. The differences of to-day will pass away. Aye, the men of to-day will disappear, but the cause of Ireland will remain. Its justice has come to be admitted by the public opinion of the civilized world, and its triumph is as inevitable as the rising of to-morrow's sun.

AMNESTY.

PUBLIC MEETING IN NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE,

12TH NOVEMBER, 1893.

XVIII.

MR. CHAIRMAN, ladies, and gentlemen—I esteem it a great pleasure to have the opportunity of addressing this large assembly of the public of Newcastle. The opportunity has often been afforded to me of speaking to an assembly of Irishmen on this question of Amnesty, and although I know that the greater part of this meeting is made up of Irishmen, still I specially value the opportunity afforded to me to-day, because it enables me to speak and argue on this question, not to Irishmen only, but, as I hope, through the medium of a fair and friendly Press, to address an argument for Amnesty to the large body of Englishmen outside. It would be easy for me to arouse your enthusiasm by dealing with this Amnesty question upon sentimental lines, but I desire to utilise the opportunity which is given to me to-night to place, as far as I am able to do so, before the people of this great city the whole of our case in favour of Amnesty for these prisoners, and I, therefore, desire not to address any argument to Irishmen who, after all, cannot have any difference of opinion on this question, nor to attempt to arouse your enthusiasm by appeals to your emotions, but rather, if you will bear with me in patience and silence, to endeavour to address to the English public

outside a calm, cool, and reasonable argument in favour of the position which we take up.

I claim a fair hearing upon this matter from all Englishmen of every party. I claim a fair hearing from that English party which is pledged to concession to the National sentiment of Ireland. I claim from them not merely a fair but a sympathetic hearing for our appeal.

Now, first of all, I desire to make it plain, though I scarcely think that in any gathering of Irishmen it is necessary for me to do so, that we who are arguing in favour of the release of the present prisoners do not in the remotest degree sympathise with dynamite as a political agent. We believe that the use of methods of that kind was wrong in itself, and was stupid. It was wrong, and not calculated to advance any cause for which it was used. But this dynamite conspiracy, as it is called, is to-day at an end. I do not for a moment deny the right of England, when face to face with such a conspiracy, to grapple with it, and to crush it. In this case she has done so. That dynamite conspiracy is dead and gone. It has no existence in the politics of to-day, and the English people ought to remember that after all the end of punishment is prevention. The end of punishment is not to wreak vengeance upon the men we punish, but to prevent the recurrence of offences, and we say that when it is known by the people of England that this dynamite conspiracy is at an end, it is cruel; it is cowardly; it is unworthy of a great nation, simply for the gratification of a feeling of vindictiveness against men who undoubtedly were guilty of offences that they were right in crushing, to insist upon prolonging their punishment. That is in the nature of a preliminary remark.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, we base our claim for

Amnesty upon three perfectly distinct and broad grounds. I will deal with each of them separately, and I maintain that if I establish any one of the three I shall have made out a complete case in favour of the immediate release of these men. The first ground I go on is this. These prisoners are political offenders. If I establish the fact to your satisfaction that these are political prisoners, then I say it will be unjust for that great English party which is pledged to do justice to Ireland to refuse to release these men.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, are these men political prisoners? What is a political prisoner? Let us for a moment examine what is a political prisoner. Is a man who takes arms against a Government boldly, and, in the light of day, wages war against the Government—is he a political prisoner? The rebel has in all nations been regarded as a political prisoner. But I remember well when, as the first act of my political life, I took part in an Amnesty movement—I remember we were claiming from England the release of Michael Davitt and his associates. I remember we were told then, just as we are told now about the present prisoners, that they were not political offenders.

What is a political offender? Is a Member of Parliament who makes a speech distasteful to the Government and is put into prison—is he a political offender? I remember when Mr. Balfour did me the honour of sending me to prison for a public speech which he did not approve of, that he said I was not a political offender, and I was treated in prison exactly the same as a pickpocket or an ordinary criminal. What is a political offender? After all, there is such a thing in the world as a political offender. But who is to draw the distinction? I say that England has never found the slightest difficulty in defining what a political offender is, excepting when she has been dealing with Ireland.

It is the boast of Englishmen that their country is the great sanctuary of the world. Political offenders from every part of the world are able to come to the shores of England, and to find refuge and safety here. The ordinary criminal from Russia, from Germany, or from France finds no foothold here in England, but the political offender finds refuge and safety from his enemies. How is it that England has never found any difficulty in deciding what a political offender is when she is dealing with other nations; but in her dealings with Ireland she has never been able to make the admission that there is such a thing as a political prisoner at all.

You remember how Mazzini was received with open arms in England. You remember how even in the case of Orsini—who had been guilty of an attempt to take human life by an explosion—you remember how even in his case the London *Times* declared that he was:—

“A conspirator against a despotic ruler who himself had seized the throne by craft and violence, and against whom craft and violence, if not justifiable, were at least not to be classed with the guilt of a common murderer.”

And I have here on this question of political prisoners an extract from a case recently tried in the English courts, which, after all, ought to be of enormous weight in this matter, because when we find conflicting opinions as to what is and what is not a political offender, it is a very good test indeed to find what foreign nations regard as a political offender and what England regards as a political offender, in her dealings, not with Ireland, but with foreign nations.

Quite recently a man named Castioni was arrested in England. His case is reported in the *Times* law reports for 1890; vol. 7. He had been guilty of shooting a man at Ticino. The man was shot dead. The prisoner was

arrested in England and was about to be handed over to Switzerland to be tried, but he applied to the Court of Queen's Bench in London, for a writ of *habeas corpus*, on the ground that he was a political offender, and that England should not give him up to his Government. I have here the report of the case taken from the law reports of 1890.

According to the evidence Castioni took deliberate aim, pointing his pistol at Senator Rossi, and shot him dead, and, seeing him fall, said with satisfaction "He is done."

Here was a case, then, of what would seem to have been very little removed from murder. The case arose out of a sort of revolt in Switzerland against the Government of the day. The English Court of Queen's Bench held it was a political offence, and they refused to give Castioni up to the Swiss Government, and the Court of Queen's Bench, in that case, approved and adopted the definitions of a political prisoner, given, in the first place, by Mr. John Stuart Mill, and in the second place by Sir James Fitz-James Stephen.

Mr. John Stuart Mill had defined a political offence to mean "an offence committed in the furtherance of civil war, insurrection, or political commotion," and Sir James Fitz-James Stephen's definition, specifically upheld the other day in this case by the Queen's Bench was

"A political offence was any offence incidental to or forming part of political disturbances."

Now, in the face of these facts, in the face of that decision, in the face of these definitions accepted by high authority, I ask is it possible for any fair-minded man to deny that John Daly and his comrades are suffering for political offences? What are the offences for which Daly and his comrades are now in prison?

There is here in England a most wide-spread misapprehension on this point. It is believed in Ireland, and by many of our best friends in England, that these acts were committed, not from any selfish, sordid, or degraded motive, but committed to advance the cause of popular freedom or of national right. Then I say no matter how stupid, no matter how culpable, no matter—if you like—how criminal was the act committed, the offence becomes a political offence as distinguished from an ordinary crime, and, judged by these tests, how can any intelligent Englishman maintain, as Mr. Asquith maintained the other day, that these Irish prisoners are not political offenders, but are ordinary criminals?

Gentlemen, the essence of all criminality lies, after all, in intention. No doubt every man who commits an offence against the law renders himself liable to pay the penalty attached to the offence, but the man who breaks that law, not from any criminal intent, not from any selfish, sordid, unworthy, or depraved motive, but in order to advance the cause of popular freedom or national right, no matter how culpable, dangerous, or stupid his methods may be, is, and must be, a political offender as distinguished from an ordinary criminal. Judged by these tests, no one can deny to the convicts in Portland the title of political prisoners. I am not arguing that political prisoners should not be punished. To do so would be absurd, and, of course, the measure of punishment must depend upon the culpability and danger of their conduct.

John Daly and others, if guilty of the offences laid to their charge, no doubt deserved severe punishment, and severe punishment they have received through long years of convict life, but that they are political prisoners, in my view, cannot be denied. They were engaged upon a political

enterprise, carrying on the political war against England, by stupid means no doubt, if they were rightly convicted, but still none the less animated by political as distinguished from ordinary criminal motives, and it is to my mind ridiculous to regard them in the same light, no matter what their guilt, as the regulation British or Irish convict who is sentenced for atrocious crime to penal servitude for life.

Let us see what the offences were for which these men were convicted. Upon this matter there is wide-spread misapprehension. The general impression is they were tried and convicted of dynamite offences. That is not so. Not a single one of these men was ever convicted of anything of the kind. These men were not one of them tried under the Dynamite Act. They were tried all of them under the Treason Felony Act, which was passed in 1848 for the special benefit of John Mitchel. Under the Explosive Substances Act of 1883, if these men had been tried and convicted not one of them could have got a sentence of penal servitude for life. The longest sentence would have been fourteen years, and in the most extreme case twenty years. They were not any of them tried under this Act. They were tried, in point of fact, for high treason. We have heard the explanation given by an Englishman of what this Treason Felony Act is, and this, in my opinion, ought to be conclusive on the question as to whether they are political offenders or not.

In his history of the criminal law, Sir James Stephen, who is accepted as a great authority on these matters by everybody, divides offences of a political character into three classes. He says the first and most obvious is an offence consisting in

“An attack on the political order of things established in the country where it is committed—high treason, riots for political pur-

poses, and crimes like the offences dealt with by the Treason Felony Act of 1848."

Therefore, you have testimony that the offences dealt with by the Treason Felony Act of 1848 are in their nature and essence political offences. It is true that in the case of John Daly, and in some other cases, there were counts in the indictment which charged them with attempting to carry out their treasonable business by means of the use of dynamite, but I say here—as I said in the House of Commons, when I was not contradicted by any responsible Minister—I say here to-day that the conviction of Daly and the others did not in the remotest degree depend upon that particular count of the indictment; that that count was thrown in to give, as it were, a lurid light to the case, but what they were really tried for was the old charge of Fenianism; that in John Daly's case he was convicted on the evidence of an informer, who swore that he had been engaged in enrolling Fenians in Sligo in 1868. These men were tried upon this old stale charge of Fenianism ten years after every Fenian had been amnestied by the English Government. They were convicted on this old charge of Fenianism, and then, having been convicted of Fenianism, they were sentenced for a different crime. They were sentenced to penal servitude for life for suspected connection with dynamite.

Now I think I have said sufficient to show you that on this broad ground we have a conclusive case to show that these prisoners are political prisoners. Sir Henry James the English Attorney-General, who prosecuted them, thus described their offence:—

"The prisoners were indicted under the statute passed in 1848, and the charge was known in legal language as that of treason-felony. It differed in some respects slightly from a charge of high treason,

and the prisoners substantially were charged that they conspired together to levy war and to raise an insurrection and rebellion against the Queen as sovereign of this realm."

The judge who tried the case described the offence as "levying war upon the Queen," and I contend—it is an absurdity to contend—that a case thus defined was not a political one.

I know that Mr. Asquith has stated in my hearing in the House of Commons, and recently outside the House of Commons, that these men are not political prisoners. He has declared that they are ordinary criminals, and ordinary criminals of the worst type, and he has publicly pledged himself that so long as he is in command of the Home Office he will not permit their sentence to be shortened by a day. I am glad to know that that is not the opinion of all Mr. Asquith's colleagues.

My friend Mr. Leamy has alluded to Mr. Morley. Well, I answer Mr. Asquith by quoting Mr. Morley. Mr. Asquith says they are not political prisoners, that they are ordinary criminals, and of the worst type. Mr. Morley said at the last election in Newcastle that—

"When we have succeeded in our efforts to bring the old system of Irish Government completely to an end, then it will be time to consider whether the British Government would not be well advised, as incidental to that momentous settlement of national accounts, to show the same spirit towards these prisoners as was shown, for example, by the Government of the French Republic towards the exiled Communards. Such, at least, is my judgment."

What is the meaning of that? Does it mean that Mr. Morley thinks that because Home Rule is carried that ordinary prisoners of the worst type are to be released from jail? No, it means that Mr. Morley recognises that these prisoners are political offenders.

In Dublin, in February, 1888, Mr. Morley was even more distinct. He said :—

“I want to ask a question. The French amnestied the Communards who were guilty of most atrocious crimes against their country. The Americans amnestied Sessionist rebels who were guilty of an atrocious crime against the Government. Are the only people in the world for whom there is to be no amnesty, no act of oblivion, to be Irishmen, whose only fault has been that they have used their talents for the benefit of their countrymen, and done the best they could to raise up the miserable and oppressed and down-trodden people of this country? Gentlemen, it is not so; that is no longer, in spite of what eminent men may say, that is no longer the mind or intention of the people of Great Britain. We are here to-night—Lord Ripon and I are here to assure you that at least one great party is anxious for an amnesty, for an act of oblivion on your side and ours both.”

I repeat, therefore, as against the declaration of Mr. Asquith the declaration of Mr. Morley. For my part, I am not discouraged in the remotest degree by the declaration of Mr. Asquith. Mr. Asquith, remember, is a very young Parliamentary hand. The old Parliamentary hand in speaking upon this question made no declaration of never-ending hostility to our appeal, and if Mr. Asquith had read aright the history of England for the last fifteen years he would have known that there is nothing so dangerous to the reputation of an English statesman, and especially of an English Liberal statesman, as to say “Never” to a demand which is made by the united voice of the people of Ireland.

I now proceed. I claim to have shown you that these are political prisoners. I have shown it by the experience of other countries, by the decision of your law courts, by the declaration of some of your greatest men, and by the declaration finally of a member of the Cabinet. I pass

from that point with this statement, that if those men are political prisoners, then I, for my part, cannot understand the attitude of those Liberal statesmen who say they are anxious to conciliate national sentiment in Ireland, and to make a lasting treaty between the democracies of the two countries, and who, in the same breath, declare they will not release persons whom they themselves admit to have been the victims of the old accursed system which they hope to-day is doomed.

The second ground on which we appeal to Englishmen in favour of those men is, that their convictions were obtained under such circumstances of public excitement, of panic, and of passion in England, that they ought to be scanned and reviewed now with the greatest care. It is not necessary for my argument to make any accusations against English judges, English Crown prosecutors, or English juries. All I claim is that they are all human, like the rest of us, and that the circumstance of panic which existed at the time of the trial of those men were such as to bias the minds and warp the judgments of the sternest and wisest of them all.

Remember the circumstances which surrounded the trial of John Daly, of James Egan, and the others.

I was reading the report of that trial again the other day and I read how the streets outside were filled with military, how barricades were erected outside the entrances of the court, how the public were excluded, how every inch of space in the court was occupied by policemen armed to the teeth, and how the universal feeling was that a state almost of siege had arisen. The first incident in the trial is a remarkable proof of the state of panic which existed. The counsel for the prisoners, I think at the very commencement of the trial, made an appeal to the judge. He said:—

“My clients are innocent men in the sight of the law till they are convicted ; but, the Press of Birmingham has convicted them beforehand.”

And he brought to the attention of the judge articles which had been published that very morning, headed “Trial of the Irish Dynamitards.”

Is it possible to conceive that under such conditions a perfectly fair and impartial trial could be given by juries of Englishmen to those poor hunted Irish prisoners ? I do not say that these circumstances point to the conviction being wrong, but I do say they make an unanswerable case in favour of such a reconsideration of the whole question as we have demanded, and as Mr. Asquith has refused. But it is not merely that those trials were held under such circumstances. There is more than that. We know now that those men were convicted upon evidence which time has shown to have been tainted and false. There is scarcely one of those cases in which evidence was not produced which, judged calmly to-day, must appear of a tainted and suspicious character.

Take the case of the trial of Daly and Egan. In that case the proof against Daly seemed strong. Daly was found with explosives in his possession, and he was convicted and sent to jail. Some three or four years afterwards when he had been suffering in silence during that time, we were startled by a declaration made, not by an Irishman, not by a sympathiser with Daly, but by a high English official—by the head constable of the police of Birmingham. That declaration stands to-day uncontradicted and undisputed.

It was contained in the following letter addressed to the Home Secretary by Alderman Manton, a respected member of the Corporation of Birmingham :—

"Hollybank, Edgbaston, Oct. 6, 1887.

"HONOURED SIR,—It is with deep regret that I feel compelled to address you. Three weeks since, at the request of several members of the Watch Committee, Mr. Farndale, Chief of the Birmingham Police, applied to you, asking the favour of an interview for the purpose of laying before you the circumstances which led to the arrest and conviction of the convicts Daly and Egan. The request was made in the hope of obtaining their release, or an order for an investigation of the circumstances connected with their arrest and trial. I am informed by a brother magistrate that the interview sought has taken place with the following result, viz. :—'That if the additional evidence favourable to Egan can be produced you will be prepared to give it favourable consideration, but with regard to Daly nothing will induce you to interfere with the verdict.'

"Sir, I will take the liberty of stating some of the circumstances connected with the arrest, as they were stated to me twelve months since. Without any preliminary remark Mr. Farndale spoke as follows :—'*Mr. Alderman Manton, you will be surprised when I tell you that the explosives found on Daly were "planted" on him by the Police.*' I said, 'Can it be possible?' Mr. Farndale replied, 'It is really so.' I said, 'Are you absolutely certain?' Mr. F. said, 'I am,' adding, '*And I promise you that I will never engage in another such business as long as I live.*' I felt appalled by the revelation, and after a few days' calm reflection, in the presence of a gentleman, Mr. F. engaged to visit the Home Secretary, but thought it best to go alone. Mr. F. said it was not exactly the police who 'planted' the explosives on Daly, but a companion and confederate of Daly, who was in the employment of the Irish police. Mr. F. added that the explosives were procured in America, and delivered to the confederate of Daly; also that the Irish police authorities not only supplied cash for the purchase of explosives, but contributed to the support of the confederate, and through him to the support of Daly for a considerable time. In fact it was a Government manufactured case got up by the Irish police. Mr. F. has stated it as his opinion that Daly had never been associated with Dynamitards, and that he would have thrown the explosives out of the railway carriage on the first opportunity. Nor was Mr. F. alone in his opinion. Another police officer of high rank said he believed Daly would have thrown the explosives out of the window in the first tunnel he came to. Mr. F. has stated that but for finding the explosives there was no ground for the arrest of either Daly or Egan. With regard to Egan there were great doubts at the time in relation to the finding of the canister in the garden. Neither the canister nor its contents were worth hiding or finding. Not a few were surprised

at his committal for trial, and had you, Sir, been counsel for the defence of Egan, I should have heard you say in your own impressive style that there were no grounds whatever to justify a committal. Sir, I have been passing through a most painful ordeal for twelve months. I have earnestly striven by the best means I could think of to obtain some measure of redress for the wrongs inflicted as a result of a vile conspiracy. I verily believe that justice imperatively demands a thorough investigation of the whole case; nor need I conceal from you, Sir, that the dread of the same men or other members of the Irish police force may have or may still be perpetrating similar atrocities on others, and imperilling the lives of my fellow subjects, has had very considerable influence in promoting my action. Neither time, experience, nor observation has weakened my resolve. Sir, I earnestly plead for your help. The knowledge of this letter is confined to myself. I pray God that He may be pleased so to order events that, as far as possible, the wrong may be redressed, and my soul, which has been terribly oppressed for the long period of twelve months, be relieved of a burden.—I remain, honoured Sir, yours most respectfully,

“HENRY MANTON.”

You may object to me that this letter is stale. It is stale in this sense, that it has been repeated again and again, but it remains still upon record. It has never been disproved, and I say that so long as it remains on record, to put it at the very lowest, the gravest suspicion attaches to the conviction of John Daly. When I brought that statement before the House of Commons, the late Government were in power, and Mr. Matthews answered me by saying that he had held a private investigation and satisfied himself that that English official (the head of the police, Mr. Farndale) had made a mistake. But I asked him :—

“Has Mr. Farndale admitted that he made a mistake, or is he still of the same opinion?”

Mr. Matthews said across the floor of the House of Commons to me that Mr. Farndale still held the same opinion.

Therefore, I declare here to-day that that statement of Mr. Farndale stands still upon record, and I demand from

Mr. Asquith that he shall not permit the scandal to continue of a gentleman remaining in the high position of the Chief of Police in the City of Birmingham who has made that awful, that appalling charge against the police without that charge being investigated or disproved. Either that charge is true or false. Mr. Farndale still stands by it. If the charge is false, no punishment could be too great for a man who would invent a cruel calumny against the police such as that.

On the other hand, if the charge is true, John Daly is the victim of as foul a plot as ever disgraced the annals of England. But it was not merely that one instance which could be cited to discredit the verdict which sent John Daly to prison. John Daly and James Egan were convicted on the same evidence and by the same verdict. When I told, some two or three years ago, this story of the conviction of Egan for the first time to the House of Commons I at once drew from a number of English Members the statement that I had instilled a grave doubt into their minds as to the justice of Egan's conviction.

The Government to-day, and Mr. Asquith himself, have admitted that the evidence which sent Egan to gaol was wrong and tainted evidence. He has admitted that the verdict which sent Egan to gaol was a wrong verdict, and he has released him, but the same evidence and the same verdict convicted John Daly, and he tells us to-day that John Daly is to remain in gaol every day of his natural life.

Fellow-countrymen, I am glad to know that the matter requires no arguing with you. But I do trust that English sympathisers outside will consider this question in the light of what I have said, and in connection with Mr. Egan will consider this also, that Mr. Asquith has admitted that he released him because he had a grave doubt as to whether he

ought ever to have been convicted. And yet what has he done? If there was an honest doubt in Egan's case, according to the spirit and genius of British law, Egan was entitled to an acquittal. Egan was convicted. The doubt is now admitted, and he is released, and released not as a free man—no, but he is given a ticket-of-leave, which makes it necessary for him, as if he were a released criminal, to go and report himself to the police. That is, perhaps, a small matter, but I appeal to generous men to say that Mr. Asquith, in the case of James Egan, ought not to have halted half way. If he made up his mind that his conviction was wrong, he ought to have done a manly and generous thing, and have given him a free pardon, and not given him simply his liberty on a ticket-of-leave.

Have I shown that this second ground for release is well founded—namely, that the prisoners in question for whom I plead were tried under such circumstances of panic and terror that one must look with suspicion on the result of the trials, and that, consequently, the convictions at least ought to be reconsidered now?

I pass now to the third ground on which we demand Amnesty. We say, even if these men were not political offenders, even if Mr. Asquith is right, and that they are common criminals, and even if they were properly convicted, and that there was no shadow of doubt or suspicion resting on their cases, still we say—and this is our third and unanswerable ground—that they have been sufficiently punished.

Remember, they were sentenced, every one of them, to penal servitude for life. They have been in gaol, almost all of them, for ten years. Those ten years have been a lifetime of sorrow and misery. I have sat with these men alone in their cells—men who went in there scarcely having

reached the age of manhood—some of them, like Wilson, who went in there before they were twenty years of age. What have those ten years meant for them?

It has meant a perfect life of misery and of torture. It has changed these young men into old and decrepit men. For my part, when I have talked to them in Portland prison for the hour together, I have often and often felt my heart burn at the thought that anything should be allowed amongst Irishmen to stand between them and an unanimous demand for their release.

However, I do not desire, as I said at the commencement, to make appeals to your emotions or sentiments. Let me keep, if I can, to reason and argument. Have they been punished enough? Have ten years of penal servitude been enough punishment for the crime for which they were tried and convicted?

Our views on this matter might be received with some suspicion. Let me test that question, not by what we think, but, by what in calm moments, Englishmen think. You will remember that some two or three years ago there was a trial in Walsall of a number of men who were charged—not in a roundabout way and under the Treason Felony Act, but directly under the Dynamite Act—of having dynamite in their possession, and of intending to use it for the destruction of human life. These men were found with a number of explosives in their possession almost exactly similar to those found in the possession of Daly. At the time when they were tried all Europe was ringing with the occurrence of dynamite explosions in Paris and elsewhere. But here in England there was no panic in the matter whatever. There was a perfect calmness of public opinion, and these men were brought to trial and tried without any accompaniment of excitement or panic such as

prevailed during the trials of the Irish prisoners. Strange to say, they were tried by precisely the same judge who had sentenced Daly and Egan, Mr. Justice Hawkins. Some of these men were Englishmen; others of them were foreigners. In addition, too, to the explosives, there were found upon them a number of most incriminating documents, explaining, amongst other things, how what they called "the execution" could be carried out by dynamite.

Amongst other documents was one explaining with minute details how a bomb might be exploded in a crowded theatre, as actually happened a few weeks later in Barcelona, with such appalling loss of human life.

Mark the difference. When they were convicted, one of them stood up in the dock and boldly admitted his guilt, and said that for his part he was an Anarchist, and believed that he was justified in using explosives even at the risk of taking human life to forward his cause.

Very well. They were convicted by the same judge who convicted Daly under circumstances which left no doubt whatever as to their guilt, convicted after their own declarations that they glorified in their act, and the judge said—I have the *Times* report of his speech by me—

"He could not magnify the enormity of their crimes, and said that an example must be made of them, and that he would have to punish them for there having been found in their possession a number of bombs to be used for the destruction of human life. He regretted that it became now his duty to pass so severe a sentence upon them."

And he then proceeded to sentence them to ten, seven, and five years' penal servitude.

That was the English case. That was the case of the trial of Englishmen at a time when there was no panic and excitement in England for an offence more clearly proved than was the case of Daly or Egan, for an offence

which they repudiated, and which the English prisoners admitted, and the Irishmen were sentenced to penal servitude for life, while the Englishmen got off with seven years.

If the Irish prisoners had received the full sentence, the fullest sentence that had been given to one of these English prisoners—that is ten years—they would have all, every man of them, been at liberty to-day.

Now, I ask in the face of that case, have these men been punished long enough?

What is the answer to the Walsall case? I made this statement which you have just listened to in the House of Commons, and Mr. Asquith, in his speech, in answering me, gave the “go by” to the Walsall case, and never alluded to it. He was wise, because I say here to-day there is no answer to it. I appeal to fair-minded Englishmen. They may think these men were not political offenders. They may differ with us in that. They may think these men got the fairest trial possible, and that no suspicions surrounded their convictions. But how can they defend for the same offence a sentence of life for an Irishman and a sentence of five years for an Englishman? They cannot defend it, and I therefore say upon these three grounds we have a conclusive case to submit to English public opinion.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I am most grateful to you for having listened with such patience to what, after all, must have been a dry, because a detailed, statement of the case which we make on behalf of these prisoners. To sum up in a word, we say those are political prisoners, and ought to be released by the party whose policy was based upon a “union of hearts.”

We say in the second place, that whether they are political prisoners or not, a grievous suspicion attaches to their trials and their convictions, and on that ground re-

consideration of their cases ought to take place. And finally we say that whether they are political prisoners or not, and whether their trials were fair trials or not, judged by the test of the Walsall case, they have been punished sufficiently long.

Ireland to-day asks the English people for the release of these prisoners. Ireland says, and no one can honestly deny it, that the offences laid at their door sprang from the old vicious system which at least one English party to-day admits to have been cruel, unjust, and wrong.

A better day we are told, and I hope is, dawning for the people of Ireland—a day of friendship between the people of the two democracies. Ireland to-day asks as a pledge of that coming day the release of these prisoners. We ask their release with moderation and calmness. We base our appeal upon sound and unanswerable facts and reasons. We appeal to-day from Mr. Asquith to those whose servant Mr. Asquith is. We appeal to the people to do justice to Ireland in this matter. We appeal to them to release these men in the name of justice, of humanity, and of mercy.

Neither England nor the Government of the day need fear the effects of this act of clemency. Mercy never yet weakened the hand nor lessened the prestige of those who bestowed it.

“ No ceremony that to great ones 'longs,
Not the king's crown nor the deputed sword,
The marshal's truncheon nor the judge's robe,
Becomes them with one-half so good a grace
As mercy does.”

THE FINANCIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

SPEECH IN HOUSE OF COMMONS, MARCH 30TH, 1897.

XIX.

MR. SPEAKER,—I rise for the purpose of seconding the motion which has been made by the hon. and learned gentleman, and the House will see at a glance that the mere fact of my doing so is an indication that upon the main issues at stake in this matter there is practical unanimity amongst all Irishmen. Possibly when the division takes place all Irish members may not vote for the resolution, and I must express my keen personal regret that it was not framed in such a way as to secure an absolutely unanimous vote. But the fact remains that Ireland's case for redress of this grievance is put forward on behalf of no class or party, but from the whole people, united as they have never been in any great public issue for over one hundred years.

Now what may be said in a few words to be the main issues involved in this controversy? Ireland's complaint is that she is unequally taxed, having regard to her comparative capacity to bear taxation, that the Union placed upon her a burden she was unable to bear, that it brought her to ruin and bankruptcy, that the provisions of the Treaty which were specially framed for her protection have been violated or neglected, and that since the year

1853 she has, while her population has diminished and her wealth steadily decreased, been overcharged to the extent of between two and three millions a year. Upon these main facts (however differences may appear in various aspects of the question)—I think the House will find from the debate that there is a practical unanimity amongst most of the Irish members.

Now, the first thing that occurs to me to observe is this: Does it not seem almost incredible that facts of this gravity should have failed until the present time to engage the serious attention of Parliament? If that has been so, the fault does not rest upon Ireland.

The protests made against the injustice of the Act of Union at the time have never ceased to be made by Irish members in this House ever since. In the early forties Mr. Staunton, who was at that time member, I think, for Carlow raised this question. O'Connell raised this question. Mr. O'Neill Daunt, a man whose writings upon Irish economic matters are well known, I am sure, to many members of this House, raised this question in a most valuable way. General Dunne and The O'Connor Don raised it again in this House. Later on Sir Joseph Neale M'Keenna and Mr. Mitchel Henry raised it, but during all this time Ireland failed to gain the ear of the House, or to induce this Parliament to deal with this question in a serious spirit. The great incalculable good which, in my opinion, has been done to Ireland by the labours of the recent Royal Commission is that it is now no longer possible to ignore these facts.

Sir, the constitution of that Commission makes it impossible for Parliament to disregard its findings. It was a body appointed by Great Britain, containing a British majority, numbering amongst its members some of the

greatest financial authorities of the day, men whose lives have been devoted to the service of the British Treasury. It had the case against Ireland's claim put forward before it with the greatest skill, by the most competent witnesses. No one has ventured to impugn its impartiality or capacity as a tribunal, and under these circumstances its findings must receive the serious attention of this House, and I think Ireland is to be congratulated that at last this great question has come to such a stage that it must be seriously treated by the British Parliament.

Now, sir, the work of the Commission may roughly be divided into two parts—

1st. Their investigation into the history of the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland, and

2nd. Their investigation into the relative taxable capacities of Great Britain and Ireland.

To-day, sir, the hon. and learned gentleman has dealt so exhaustively with the historical portion of this case, that it would be an unwise proceeding on my part if I dilated at any length upon it. Let me point out this, that in the investigations of the Royal Commission, they discovered no new facts. They simply reported facts that have been known to every generation of Irishmen, and which, indeed, have been burned into the memories and hearts of the Irish people. But the great and incalculable good they did, by their investigation into the historical portion of this case, was that in the result they have succeeded by their reports in bringing some knowledge of these facts to the minds of the people of Great Britain, who, after all, are the masters of this Parliament.

Now, I think I may assert, without any appearance of disrespect to the House, but to emphasise the point I have in my mind, that until this Commission sat and these

reports appeared, I do not believe that three per cent. of the British members of this House were acquainted with these historical facts dealing with the financial relations between the countries. Let me briefly recall what those facts are—

1. Before the Union Ireland was under no legal obligation to contribute towards any expenditure, either civil or military, outside her own shores;

2. When the Constitution of 1782 was established, and for a decade afterwards, the taxation of Ireland was not more than one million, and her debt was under two millions. At the time of the Union her taxation had increased to two and-a-half millions, and her debt to twenty-eight millions. The increase of her debt was due to voluntary aid given to Great Britain in the French war, and to the expenses of suppressing the insurrection of 1798, an insurrection which, most Irishmen believe, was fostered and provoked deliberately as a part of British policy in Ireland.

In 1800 the Treaty of Union came into existence. Under its provisions Ireland was for a fixed number of years to contribute in the proportion of two to fifteen to the general revenue; but it was provided, that at any time that the debts of the two countries came into the same proportions as the contributions the Exchequers might be amalgamated, and a system of indiscriminate taxation, as it was called, established. The Treaty provided that under no circumstances was Ireland to be taxed to more than her fair proportion, having regard to her taxable capacity, and even after the amalgamation of the Exchequers this principle was to be carried out, and Ireland was to have the benefit of exemptions and abatements as her circumstances demanded.

It is now admitted that that proportion was unjust and ruinous. At the time it was vehemently protested against in the Irish Parliament. Lord Castlereagh, however, and the Irish Government of the day, maintained that under its operation Ireland would gain, and, in fact, that Great Britain was dealing in a most generous manner with Ireland. But we have it to-day on the authority of every British Treasury official, who has spoken on this matter, from Mr. Smith in 1816 and Mr. Chisholm in 1865 down to Sir E. Hamilton in his recent evidence, that this proportion was exorbitant and ruinous, and as a matter of fact, events proved it so, because it led to the absolute ruin and bankruptcy of Irish finance.

Seventeen years afterwards, in the year 1817, what was the state of things existing in Ireland? The taxation had increased fourfold, and the Irish debt had quadrupled, while in the same period the British debt had not doubled. Ireland, though her taxation quadrupled, was never able to pay her proportion of two to fifteen, so her debt increased until it bore to the British debt the proportion fixed by the Act of Union as the occasion when the two Exchequers should be amalgamated.

In 1817 the Exchequers were amalgamated, and ever since that date Ireland has been, in regard to financial matters as well as legislative, an integral part of the United Kingdom, so far as the theory of the Act of Union is concerned. But Article 7 of the Treaty specially provided that Ireland should be in a position to claim what was called "special exemptions and abatements," even after the amalgamation of the Exchequers and the imposition of indiscriminate taxation, so that she should never be called upon to pay more than her fair proportion,

according to her relative taxable capacity. The report of The O'Connor Don, and those members of the Commission who agreed with him, summarised in a few words the historical position of Ireland up to this point. They said :

(1.) "That Ireland and Great Britain entered into legislative partnership on the clear understanding that they were still, for purposes of taxation, to be regarded as separate and distinct financial units.

(2.) "That Ireland was to contribute to the Imperial expenditure in proportion to her resources, so far as the same could be ascertained, and that even after the imposition of indiscriminate taxation, if circumstances permitted its adoption, she might claim special exemptions and abatements.

(3.) "That the Imperial expenditure to which these respective contributions were to be made included not only the whole Civil expenditure of Ireland, but even special grants for Irish purposes which were to remain in operation for twenty years."

That this was our position under the Union before and after 1817, and down to this moment is not, I think, denied by anyone. We take our stand to-day on that provision of the Treaty. We say Ireland's claim, under the 7th Article, to special consideration in matters of taxation as a distinct portion of the United Kingdom has never become extinct, and that from a legal point of view it is impossible to regard Ireland as being no more than a group of English counties. We assert a legal and constitutional claim to be taxed only in proportion to our taxable capacity as a distinct country.

That this is the legal effect of the 7th Article cannot be questioned. It is equally clear that such was the intention of the framers of the Union. In every speech of Pitt and of Castlereagh it was asserted again and again that under no circumstances was Ireland ever to pay more than according to her relative ability. Lord Castlereagh said :—

“As to the future, it is expected that the two countries should move forward together and unite with regard to their expenses in the measure of their relative abilities. The great point, therefore, to be ascertained is the best criterion which can be formed of the relative means of the two countries in order to fix the relative proportions of their contributions.”

Having stated the principle of the financial arrangements which he proposed, he explained that Parliament was to have the power to revise the proportionate contributions of fifteen to two at the end of twenty years in case they might,

“under different circumstances, prove to be both partial and disadvantageous. By there being a provision for revision, Ireland has the utmost possible security that she cannot be taxed beyond the measure of her comparative ability, and that *the ratio of her contributions must ever correspond with her relative wealth and prosperity.*”

Now, this so far being admitted—and I desire in the brief remarks with which I shall occupy the House at this hour of the evening to deal with the broad issues at stake—it being admitted so far that Ireland has a legal and constitutional right under the Act of Union to be taxed only in proportion to her relative taxable capacity, then I say the real question which the Commission has to decide, and which Parliament will have to decide, is—does Ireland pay more than her fair proportion according to her resources?

In 1853, Mr. Gladstone, who is the author of a great deal of the financial injustice which has been done to Ireland, extended the income tax to Ireland, and inaugurated that policy which was called in the Union Act “indiscriminate taxation,” and which he called “identity of imposts,” with the result that he raised the taxation of Ireland no less than two and-a-half millions between 1853-60.

The condition of Ireland at the time that this addition was made to her taxation was pitiable. She was exhausted after one of the most awful famines in history, her population was diminished by millions, the young and strong—the wealth producers—were fleeing from her shores. Free trade, which was no doubt advantageous to England, depending so largely as it did upon manufacturing industry and commerce, entailed a distinct loss upon Ireland, dependent entirely upon agriculture.

As was well said by Mr. Childers in his report—

“Just as Ireland suffered in the last century, from the protective and exclusive commercial policy of Great Britain, so she has been at a disadvantage in this century from the adoption of a policy of free trade.”

It was at such a time and under such circumstances that Mr. Gladstone imposed two and a-half millions extra taxation, and inaugurated a scheme under which taxation per head in Ireland increased from 13s. 11d. to £1 5s. 4d., while in the same period in England, though England was increasing every day in prosperity, the taxation per head was only increased 3s.

Mr. Gladstone's proposals were, of course, resisted by Irish members, and, of course, unsuccessfully. He promised that the income tax should be only temporary. It was enacted only for seven years. It has remained ever since.

He announced, as a compensation to Ireland, that he would relieve her of all liability for the consolidated annuities. The capital debt of these loans was four millions, the annual charge for interest and repayment about £250,000. But the first year's income tax was £460,000, so that in exchange for a terminable charge of

£250,000 and a capital liability of £4,000,000, Ireland was saddled with a permanent income tax, which in the very first year yielded half a million, and under the operation of which up to to-day Ireland has paid twenty-three and a half millions of money.

In his speech proposing this arrangement, Mr. Gladstone used these words:—

“If we look to the time when Parliament will be in a position to part with the income tax, Ireland will enjoy, for a long term of years, a much larger remission of consolidated annuities than it will have to bear of additional burdens in the shape of spirit duty.”

These words seem almost comical to-day, they are so absolutely the reverse of what has occurred. Mr. Gladstone laid down the principle that the Imperial taxes to be levied on Ireland were to be made as quickly as possible identical with those levied in England—in a word, that the indiscriminate taxation spoken of in the Union should be established. The fatal fallacy which underlay the whole policy of 1853 was that identical taxation on articles consumed in Great Britain and Ireland in different proportions meant equality of taxation. The fallacy of this reasoning I need not delay the House by exposing. What has happened is the greatest proof of its absurdity.

Immediately a system was set on foot by which taxation was reduced on those articles mostly consumed in England, and taxation was increased upon those articles mostly consumed in Ireland, with the result, that the taxation of Ireland was raised by two and a-half millions, and from that day to this the taxation per head of the population in England has diminished, while in Ireland, it has increased; though, of course, the population and wealth of England have grown in enormous proportions as in Ireland they have declined.

Between 1851 and 1885 the taxation per head in England was reduced 6s. 2d., and in Ireland increased by 19s., and taking the whole period from the Union to to-day we have these extraordinary figures—the taxation per head of the population in Great Britain in 1800 was £4 13s. 4d., it is now £2 0s. 10d.; in Ireland, at the time of the Union, the taxation per head of the population was 14s. 6d., it is now £1 8s. 10d., so that in the course of a century, when England has increased beyond the dreams of man in wealth and prosperity, her taxation per head has diminished by one half, and during a century which has meant for Ireland the loss of her population, and a steady decrease in her prosperity, her taxation per head has more than doubled.

I have here an interesting table, prepared some years ago by Sir Joseph M'Kenna, which exemplifies how taxation in Ireland falls on the poor classes. He shows that for the year 1884-5, for every £1 paid for income tax in England she paid £4 12s. 8d. in miscellaneous taxes. For every £1 paid for income tax in Scotland she paid £6 10s. in miscellaneous taxes, and for every £1 paid for income tax in Ireland she paid £12 11s. Now I think it may be taken for granted that the taxation imposed in 1853 by Mr. Gladstone was unjust and excessive. Indeed I know of no one who controverts that statement. As far as I know every member of the Royal Commission agrees with it.

Perhaps the one hon. member who sits opposite, and who signed a report alone different from that of any of his colleagues, would not think I am justified in saying that of him, but at an rate in his report he does not attempt to controvert the statement that the taxation of 1853 was unjust and excessive.

I take it as established therefore—

1st. That Ireland is entitled legally and constitutionally

under the Act of Union to be taxed in proportion only to her resources ;

2nd. That this provision has been violated and that excessive and altogether unjustifiable burdens have been placed upon Ireland.

Now, let me for one moment deal with the question—What is the taxable capacity of Ireland as compared with Great Britain?

To answer that question with mathematical accuracy would, of course, be impossible. The report of the chairman of the Commission stated that nothing but a general approximation to truth can be looked for. Various principles and tests have been suggested to us. That the application of any one of these principles or tests would prove to demonstration the conclusion to which it was appointed we do not for a moment maintain, but if we find a general concurrence of opinion amongst the witnesses, and if the various tests on being applied all point in one direction, we cannot be far wrong in coming to the conclusion that the result arrived at by different men by different methods must be the correct one.

Speaking generally, every witness admitted that the resources of Ireland bear to the resources of Great Britain a much smaller proportion than their respective contributions to revenue. Sir E. Hamilton, on behalf of the Treasury, admits this, and no witness denied it. A step further than that we could, and ought to go, because it is not sufficient to ascertain the relative resources. It is universally admitted that the pressure of the taxation on small incomes is much heavier in proportion than upon large ones.

John Stuart Mills' familiar illustration holds goods in the case of nations as well as individuals. It is not the same thing to take £2 from the man who has £40

and to take £4 from the man who has £80, or £40 from the man who has £800. Sir Edward Hamilton also admitted the same principle. He said the amount of a man's income is not necessarily a test of his capacity to bear taxation. Perhaps a better test of the amount which the taxpayer can afford to pay for being governed, protected, and educated is that residue remaining after the bare necessities of life have been met.

Now the tests and standards adopted by the Commission to determine the relative resources of the two countries were as follows:—Population, comparative imports and exports, consumption of certain duty-paid articles, relative assessments to death duties, relative assessments to income tax, and the value of commodities of primary use annually consumed. Some of these tests may be rejected as inapplicable and worthless. Opinions may differ as to the trustworthiness of one or other of them, but as substantially the same result followed from the application of all these different tests it is not too much to assert that the result must be substantially sound and correct. That result is to show that the relative annual wealth of Ireland is somewhere between one-eighteenth and one-twentieth that of the United Kingdom.

As I pointed out, the comparative resources taken alone do not afford a proper test, because taxation presses more heavily on the poor than upon the rich. Mr. Childers said:—

“It is, however, we think, true that the capacity to bear taxation, whether as between rich classes and poor classes, or as between rich countries and poor countries, is not to be measured by relative annual wealth alone. The capacity of a rich country for bearing taxation relatively to that of a poor one exceeds, no doubt, the ratio given by their respective annual wealth.”

The hon. and learned gentleman who moved this motion read for the House a most significant passage from the great speech of Mr. Pitt—a quotation which not only is very apt, but, I think, most powerful. It is worth repeating. He said that—

“The smallest burthen on a poor country was to be considered when compared with that of a rich one by no means in proportion with their several abilities, for, if one country exceeded another in wealth, population, and established commerce in a proportion of two to one, he was nearly convinced that that country would be able to bear near ten times the burthens that the other would be equal to.”

In finally reporting, therefore, as everyone of the Commissioners did, that Ireland's relative tax capacity is not more than one-twentieth of Great Britain, I think they took a most moderate view.

My own view is that the estimate of the Commissioners was altogether too low. I am convinced that the relative taxable capacity of Ireland to Great Britain is very much less than one-twentieth. However, it is a great gain for Ireland that this Commission practically unanimously decided that one to twenty was the proportion, because, when that is reduced to figures, she is found to have been contributing between two and a-half millions and three millions per annum more than her fair share. That substantially, and in a few words, is our case.

What answer is to be made to it? So far as I know there has been no attempt to dispute the unanimous finding of the Commission as to the proportion of one-twentieth. The real answer urged is that Ireland received more than her share of Imperial expenditure, or, in other words, that it costs more to govern Ireland in proportion than it does to govern other portions of the kingdom.

First let me say a word on this answer from the Irish

Nationalist point of view. The government of Ireland is, no doubt, expensive. She is probably the poorest country in Europe, and her government is probably the most expensive. Why is that? The Government of any country carried on against the will of the governed will always be wasteful, extravagant, and at the same time bad. If Ireland were self-governed, do you imagine for one instant that the cost of the civil administration of the country would be as it is to-day, double per head of the population in Ireland to what it is in England? Do you imagine that Ireland would find it necessary to spend one and a-half millions a year on maintaining an armed police force about one-half the size of the regular army of the United States; or to pay a Lord Lieutenant a salary of £20,000 a year, just double what the President of the United States receives?

Allow me to look at this question from a wider point of view. If Ireland is really part of the United Kingdom, what possible distinction can you make between Imperial and local expenditure? I say you can make none. Under the Treaty of Union it is clearly laid down that all expenditure, including civil government in Ireland as well as the army and navy, shall be common or Imperial. The principle is laid down in the Act of Union that the expenditure should be regarded as common or Imperial expenditure. I might read quotation after quotation from men of the highest authority to show that that is the proper interpretation. Sir Robert Giffen, one of the most eminent witnesses examined before that Commission, emphatically laid it down that the expenditure should be regarded as Imperial taxation, and so long as you insist upon keeping Ireland as part of the United Kingdom, so long will it be impossible for you to regard money spent

on Ireland as other than money spent for the general interest of the Empire.

In the face of these facts, I ask what does the Unionist Government of this Unionist Parliament propose to do? As I understand they propose to shelve this question for an indefinite time. The proposal of a new Commission is, in my opinion, a dishonest evasion of this question—a most cowardly evasion of their responsibility by the Government. It is a dilatory motion and its one object is delay. They wish to manufacture an excuse for refusing justice to Ireland. This matter concerns Unionists as well as Nationalists. We take our stand upon the Treaty of Union. That Union was forced upon Ireland by violence and corruption. Ireland from that day to this has never ceased to protest against it. You have persisted in maintaining it. It now appears that under the Union Ireland has been robbed and pauperised, her population has been reduced by one half, and her people have remained, all through the century, restless and disaffected under your rule.

To-day Ireland appeals to one article in the Treaty of Union to protect her against further spoliation. Here you have now disclosed a gross wrong done in open violation of the expressed terms of the Union. Here you have exposed to the world the shameful fact that for forty years and more Ireland—poor depopulated Ireland—with her resources undeveloped, and with her few remaining industries languishing, and with the shadow of famine ever hanging over the land—for forty years and more she has been paying three millions a year more than her fair proportion of taxation.

This is a matter, in my opinion, more even for Unionists than for Nationalists. Refuse justice to Ireland, appoint

your new Commission, take care that years will be spent before it can come to a decision. If you like, pack it so that some verdict may be found in opposition to the verdict of the recent Commission, and, meantime, go on year after year increasing in each succeeding Budget the load of taxation upon Ireland. Do all this if you will, but I, at any rate, as a Nationalist, will have this consolation—by your action you will have torn to shreds the last rag of argument in favour of the maintenance of the Union, and you will have hastened the day when Ireland will find in a national government of her own not only political freedom, but her best safeguard against further spoliation.

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